THERE WAS A CONCERT, AND A STRING OF CARRIAGES.

THE

CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

VOL. XXXVIII.

JULY TO DECEMBER, 1878.

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE.

1878.

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THE

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JULY, 1878.

"For Percival."

CHAPTER XXXV.

Of the Landlady's Daughter.

EARLY in that December the landlady's daughter came home. Percival could not fix the precise date, but he knew it was early in the month, because about the 8th or 9th he was suddenly aware that he had more than once encountered a smile, a long curl, and a pair of turquoise earrings on the stairs. He had noticed the earrings, he could speak positively as to them. He had seen turquoises before, and taken little heed of them, but possibly his friends had happened to buy rather small ones. He felt pretty certain about the long curl. And he thought there was a smile, but he was not so absolutely sure of the smile.

By the twelfth he was quite sure of it. It seemed to him that it was cold work for any one to be so continually on the stairs in December. The owner of the smile had said "Good morning, Mr. Thorne."

On the thirteenth a question suggested itself to him. "Was she—

could she be—always running up and down stairs? Or did it happen that just when he went out and came back—?" He balanced his pen in his fingers for a minute, and sat pondering. "Oh, confound it!" he said to himself, and went on writing.

That evening he left the office to the minute, and hurried to Bellevue Street. He got half way up the stairs and met no one, but he heard a voice on the landing exclaim, "Go to old Fordham's caddy, then, for you shan't—oh good gracious!" and there was a hurried rustle. He went more slowly the rest of the way, reflecting. Fordham was another lodger, elderly, as the voice had said. Percival went to his sitting-room, and looked thoughtfully into his tea-caddy. It was nearly half full, and he calculated that, according to the ordinary rate of consumption, it should have been empty, and yet he had not been more sparing than usual. His landlady had told him where to get his tea; she said she found it cheap; it was a fine-flavoured tea, and she always drank it. Percival supposed so, and wondered where old Fordham got his tea, and whether that was fine-flavoured too.

There was a giggle outside the door, a knock, and in answer to Percival's "Come in," the landlady's daughter appeared. She explained that Emma had gone out shopping—Emma was the grimy girl who ordinarily waited on him—so, with a nervous little laugh, with a toss of the long curl, which was supposed to have got in the way somehow, and with the turquoise earrings quivering in the candlelight, she brought in the tray. She conveyed by her manner that it was a new and amusing experience in her life, but that the burden was almost more than her strength could support, and that she required assistance. Percival, who had stood up when she came in, and thanked her gravely from his position on the hearthrug, came forward and swept some books and papers out of the way, to make room for her load. In so doing their hands touched, his white and beautifully shaped, hers clumsy and coarsely coloured. (It was not poor Lydia's fault. She had written to more than one of those amiable editors, who devote a column or two in family magazines to settling questions of etiquette, giving recipes for pomades and puddings, and telling you how you may take stains out of silk, get rid of freckles, or know whether a young man means anything by his attentions. There had been a little paragraph, beginning "L.'s hands are not as white as she could wish, and she asks us what she is to do. We can only recommend," &c. Poor L. had tried every recommendation in faith and in vain, and was in a fair way to learn the hopelessness of her quest.)

The touch thrilled her with pleasure, and Thorne with repugnance. He drew back, while she busied herself in arranging his cup, saucer, and plate. She dropped the spoon on the tray, scolded herself for her own stupidity, looked up at him with a hurried apology, and laughed. If she did not blush, she conveyed by her manner a sort of idea of blushing, and went out of the room with a final giggle, being confused by his opening the door for her.

Percival breathed again, relieved from an oppression, and wondered what on earth had made her take an interest in his tea and him. Yet the reason was not far to seek. It was that tragic, melancholy, hero's face of his—he felt so little like a hero, that it was hard for him to realize that he looked like one—his sombre eyes, which might have been those of an exile thinking of his home, the air of proud and rather old-fashioned courtesy, which he had inherited from his grandfather the Rector, and developed for himself. Every girl is ready to find something of the prince in one who treats her with deference, as if she were a princess. Percival had an unconscious grace of bearing and attitude, and the considerable advantage of well-made clothes. Poverty had not yet reduced him to cheap coats, and advertised trousers. And perhaps the crowning fascination in poor Lydia's eyes was the slight, dark, silky moustache, which emphasised, without hiding, his lips.

Another rustling outside, a giggle, and a whisper—Percival would have sworn that the whisper was Emma's, if it had been possible that she could have left it behind her when she went out shopping—an ejaculation, "Gracious! I've blacked my hand!" a pause, presumably for the purpose of removing the stain, and Lydia reappeared with the kettle. She poured a portion of its contents over the fender, in her anxiety to plant it firmly on the fire. "Oh dear!" she exclaimed, "how stupid of me! Oh, Mr. Thorne!" this half archly, half pensively, fingering the curl, and surveying the steaming pool, "I'm afraid you'll wish Emma hadn't gone out—such a mess as I've made of it. What will you think of me!"

"Pray don't trouble yourself," said Percival. "The fender can't signify, except perhaps from Emma's point of view. It doesn't interfere with my comfort, I assure you."

She departed, only half convinced. Percival, with another sigh of relief, proceeded to make the tea. The water was boiling, and the fire good. Emma was apt to set a chilly kettle on a glimmering spark, but Lydia treated him better. The bit of cold meat on the table looked bigger than he expected, the butter wore a cheerful sprig of green. Percival saw his advantages, but he thought them dearly bought, especially as he had to take a turn up and down Bellevue Street, while the table was cleared.

After that day it was astonishing how often Emma went out shopping, or was busy, or had a bad finger, or a bad foot, or was helping Ma with something or other, or hadn't made herself tidy, so that Lydia had to wait on Mr. Thorne. But it was always with the same air of its being something very droll and amusing to do, and there were always some artless mistakes, which required giggling apologies. Nor could he doubt that he was in her thoughts during his absence. She had a piano downstairs, on which she accompanied herself as she sang, but she found time for domestic cares. His buttons were carefully sewn on, and his fire was always bright. One evening his table was adorned with a bright

blue vase—as blue as Lydia's earrings—filled with dried grasses, and paper flowers. He gazed blankly at it, in unspeakable horror, and then paced up and down the room, wondering how he should endure life with it continually before his eyes. Some books lay on a side table, and as he passed he looked absently at them and halted. On his Shelley, slightly askew, as if to preclude all thought of care and design, lay a little volume, bound in dingy white and gold. Percival did not touch it, but he stooped and read the title, *The Language of Flowers*, and saw that—purely by accident of course—a leaf was doubled down as if to mark a place. He straightened himself again, and his proud lip curled in disgust, as he glanced from the tawdry flowers to the tawdry book. And from below came suddenly the jingling notes of Lydia's piano, and Lydia's voice, not exactly harsh, and only occasionally out of tune, but with something hopelessly vulgar in its intonation, singing her favourite song :—

> Oh, if I had some one to love me,
> My troubles and trials to share.

Percival turned his back on the blue vase and the little book, and flinging himself into a chair before the fire, sickened at the thought of the life he was doomed to lead. Lydia, who was just mounting with a little uncertainty to a high note, was a good girl in her way, and good-looking, and had a kind sympathy for him in his evident loneliness. But was she to be the highest type of womanhood that he would meet henceforth? And was Bellevue Street to be his world? He glided into a mournful dream of Brackenhill, which would never be his, and of Sissy, who had loved him so well, yet failed to love him altogether—Sissy, who had begged for her freedom with such tender pain in her voice, while she pierced him so cruelly with her frightened eyes. Percival looked very stern in his sadness as he sat brooding over his fire, while from the room below came a triumphant burst of song—

> But I will marry my own love,
> For true of heart am I.

Sometimes he would picture to himself the future which lay before Horace's three-months old child, whose little life already played so all-important a part in his own destiny. He had questioned Hammond about him, and Hammond had replied that he heard that Lottie and the boy were both doing well. "They say that the child is a regular Blake, just like Lottie herself," said Godfrey; "and doesn't look like a Thorne at all." Percival thought, not unkindly, of Lottie's boy, of Lottie's great clear eyes in an innocent baby face, and imagined him growing up, slim and tall, to range the woods of Brackenhill in future years, as Lottie herself had wandered in the copses about Fordborough. And yet sometimes he could not but think of the change that it might make, if little James William Thorne were to die. Horace was very ill, they said; Brackenhill was shut up, and they had all gone to winter

abroad. The doctors had declared that there was not a chance for him in England.

At this time Percival kept a sort of rough diary. Here is a leaf from it:—

"I am much troubled by a certain little devil, who comes as soon as I am safely in bed, and sits on my pillow. He flattens it abominably, or else I do it myself, tossing about in my impatience. He is quite still for a minute or two, and I try my best to think he isn't there at all. Then he stoops down and whispers in my ear 'Convulsions!' and starts up again like india-rubber. I won't listen. I recall some tune or other—it won't come, and there is a hitch, a horrible blank, in the midst of which he is down again—I knew he would be—suggesting 'croup.' I repeat some bit of a poem, but it won't do; what is the next line? I think of old days with my father, when I knew nothing of Brackenhill; I try to remember my mother's face—I am getting on very well. But all at once I become conscious that he has been for some time murmuring as to himself, 'Whooping cough and scarlet fever—scarlet fever.' I grow fierce, and say, 'I pray God he may escape them all!' To which he softly replies, 'His grandfather died—his father is dying—of decline.'

"I roll over to the other side, and encounter him, or his twin brother, there. A perfectly silent little devil this time, with a faculty for calling up pictures. He shows me the office—I see it—I smell it, with its flaring gaslights, and sickly atmosphere. Then he shows me the long drawing-room at Brackenhill, the quaint old furniture, the pictures on the walls, the terrace, with its balustrade and balls of mossy stone, and through the windows come odours of jasmine, and roses, and far-off fields, while inside there is the sweetness of dried blossoms and spices, in the great china jars. A moment more, and it is Bellevue Street, with its rows of hideous, whited houses. And then again it is a river, curving swiftly and grandly between its castled rocks—or a bridge of many arches, in the twilight, and the lights coming out one by one in the old walled town, and road and river, travelling one knows not where, into regions just falling asleep in the quiet dusk. Or there is a holiday crowd, a moonlit ferry, steep wooded hills, and songs and laughter which echo in the streets, and float across the tide. Or the Alps, keenly cut against the infinite depth of blue, with a whiteness, and a far-off glory, no tongue can utter. Or a solemn cathedral, or a busy town piled up, with church and castle high aloft, and a still, transparent lake below. But through it all, and underlying it all, is Bellevue Street, with the dirty men and women, who scream and shout at each other, and wrangle in its filthy courts and alleys. Still, God knows that I don't repent, and that I wish my little cousin well."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Wanted, an Organist.

In later days Percival looked back to that Christmas, as his worst and darkest time. His pride had grown morbid, and he swore to himself that he would never give in, that Horace should never know him otherwise than self-sufficient, should never think that but for Mrs. Middleton's or Godfrey Hammond's charity he might have had his cousin as a pensioner. Brooding on thoughts such as these, he sauntered moodily beneath the lamps, when the new year was but two days old.

His progress was stopped by a little crowd collected on the pavement. There was a concert, and a string of carriages stretched halfway down the street. Just as Percival came up, a girl, in white and amber, with flowers in her hair, flitted hurriedly across the path, and up the steps, and stood glancing back, while a fair-haired, faultlessly dressed young man helped her mother to alight. The father came last, sleek, stout, and important. The old people went on in front, and the girl followed with her cavalier, looking up at him, and making some bright little speech, as they vanished into the building. Percival stood and gazed for a moment, then turned round and hurried out of the crowd. The grace and freshness, and happy beauty of the girl, had roused a fierce longing in his heart. He wanted to touch a lady's hand again, to hear the delicate accents of a lady's voice. He remembered how he used to dress himself, as that fair-haired young man was dressed, and escort Aunt Harriet and Sissy to Fordborough entertainments, where the best places were always kept for the Brackenhill party. It was dull enough sometimes, yet how he longed for one such evening now. To hand the cups once again at afternoon tea, to talk just a little with some girl on the old terms of equality—the longing was not the less real, and even passionate, that it seemed to Thorne himself to be utterly absurd. He mocked at himself as he walked the streets for a couple of hours, and then went back when the concert was just over, and the people coming away. He watched till the girl appeared. She looked a little tired, he fancied. As she came out into the chill night air, she drew a soft white cloak round her, and went by, quite unconscious of the dark young man, who stood near the door, and followed her with his eyes. The sombre apparition might have startled her, had she noticed it, though Percival was only gazing at the ghost of his dead life, and, having seen it, disappeared into the shadows once more.

"The night is darkest before the morn." In Percival's case this was true, for the next day brought a new interest and hope. A letter came from Godfrey Hammond, through which he glanced wearily, till he came to a paragraph about the Lisles. Hammond had seen a good deal of them lately. "Their father treated you shamefully," he wrote; "but

after all it is harder still on his children." ("Good heavens! Does he suppose I have a grudge against them?" said Percival to himself, and laughed with mingled irritation and amazement.) "Young Lisle wants a situation as organist somewhere, where he might give lessons and make an income so, but we can't hear of anything suitable. People say the boy is a musical genius, and will do wonders; but, for my part, I doubt it. He may, however, and in that case there will be a line in his biography to the effect that I 'was one of the first to discern,' &c.—which may be gratifying to me in my second childhood."

Percival laid the letter on the table and looked up with kindling eyes.

Only a few minutes' walk from Bellevue Street was St. Sylvester's, a large district church. The building was a distinguished example of cheap ecclesiastical work, with stripes and other pretty patterns in different coloured bricks, and varnished deal fittings, and patent corrugated roofing. All that could be done to stimulate devotion, by means of texts painted in red and blue, had been done, and St. Sylvester's, within and without, was one of those nineteenth-century churches which will doubtless be studied with interest and wonder by the architect of a future age, if they can only contrive to stand up till he comes. The incumbent was High Church, as a matter of course, and musical, more than as a matter of course. Percival looked up from his letter with a sudden remembrance that Mr. Clifton was advertising for an organist, and on his way to the office he stopped to make inquiries at the High Church bookseller's, and to post a line to Hammond. How if this should suit Bertie Lisle? He tried hard not to think too much about it, but the mere possibility that the bright young fellow, with his day-dreams, his unfinished opera, his pleasant voice, and happily thoughtless talk, might come into his life, gave Percival a new interest in it. Bertie had been a favourite of his, years before, when he used to go sometimes to Mr. Lisle's. He still thought of him as little more than a boy, the boy who used to play to him in the twilight, and he had some trouble to realise that Bertie must be nearly two-and-twenty. If he should come —but most likely he would not come. It seemed a shame even to wish to shut up the young musician, with his love for all that was beautiful and bright, in that grimy town. Thorne resolved that he would not wish it, but he opened Hammond's next letter with unusual eagerness. Godfrey said they thought it sounded well, especially as when he named Brenthill it appeared that the Lisles had some sort of acquaintance living there, an old friend of their mother's, he believed, which naturally gave them an interest in the place. Bertie had written to Mr. Clifton, who would very shortly be in town, and had made an appointment to meet him.

The next news came in a note from Lisle himself. On the first page there was a pen-and-ink portrait of the incumbent of St. Sylvester's with a nimbus, and it was elaborately dated, "Festival of St. Hilary."

"It is all as good as settled," was his triumphant announcement, "and we are in luck's way, for Judith thinks she has heard of something for herself too. You will see from my sketch that I have had my interview with Mr. Clifton. He is quite delighted with me—a great judge of character, that man! He is to write to one or two references I gave him, but they are sure to be all right, for my friends have been so bored with me and my prospects for the last few weeks, that they would swear to my fitness for heaven, if it would only send me there. I rather think, however, that St. Sylvester's will suit me better for a little while. His Reverence is going to look me up some pupils, and I have bought a Churchman's Almanac, and am thinking about starting an oratorio instead of my opera. Wasn't it strange that when your letter came from Brenthill, we should remember that an old friend of my mother's lived there? Judith and she have been writing to each other ever since. Clifton is evidently undergoing tortures with the man he has got now, so I should not wonder if we are at Brenthill in a few days —it will be better for my chance of pupils, too. I shall look you up without fail, and expect you to know everything about lodgings. How about Bellevue Street? Are you far from St. Sylvester's?"

Thorne read the letter carefully, and drew from it two conclusions and a perplexity. He concluded that Bertie Lisle's elastic spirits had quickly recovered the shock of his father's failure and flight, and that he had not the faintest idea that any property of his—Percival's—had gone down in the wreck. So much the better.

His perplexity was—what was Miss Lisle going to do? Could the "we," who were to arrive, imply that she meant to accompany her brother? And what was the something she had heard of for herself? The words haunted him. Was the ruin so complete that she, too, must face the world, and earn her own living? A sense of cruel wrong stirred in his inmost soul.

He made up his mind at last that she was coming to establish Bertie in his lodgings, before she went on her own way. He offered any help in his power, when he answered the letter; but he added a postscript, "Don't think of Bellevue Street—you wouldn't like it." He heard no more, till one day he came back to his early dinner, and found a sealed envelope on his table. It contained a half-sheet of paper, on which Bertie had scrawled in pencil, "Why did you abuse Bellevue Street? We think it will do. And why didn't you say there were rooms in this very house? We have taken them, so there is an end of your peaceful solitude. I'm going to practise for ever and ever. If you don't like it, there's no reason why you shouldn't leave—it's a free country, they say."

Percival looked round his room. She had been there, then; perhaps had stood where he was standing. His glance fell on the turquoise blue vase, and the artificial flowers, and he coloured as if he were Lydia's accomplice. Had she seen those, and the *Language of Flowers*?

As if his thought had summoned her, Lydia herself appeared, to lay the cloth for his dinner. She looked quickly round. "Did you see your note, Mr. Thorne?"

"Thank you—yes," said Percival.

"I supposed it was right to show them in here to write it, wasn't it?" she asked, after a pause. "He said he knew you very well."

"Quite right, certainly."

"A very pleasant spoken young gentleman, ain't he?" said Miss Bryant, setting down a saltcellar.

"Very," said Percival.

"Coming to play the High Church organ, he tells me," Lydia continued, as if the instrument in question were somehow saturated with Ritualism.

"Yes. At St. Sylvester's."

Lydia looked at him, but he was gazing into the fire. She went out, came back with a dish, shook her curl out of the way, and tried again.

"I suppose we're to thank you for recommending the lodgings, ain't we, Mr. Thorne? I'm sure Ma's much obliged to you. And I'm glad," this with a bashful glance, "that you felt you could. It seems as if we'd given satisfaction."

"Certainly," said Percival. "But you mustn't thank me in this case, Miss Bryant. I really didn't know what sort of lodgings my friend wanted. But of course I'm glad Mr. Lisle is coming here."

"And ain't you glad *Miss* Lisle is coming too, Mr. Thorne?" said Lydia, very archly. But she watched him, lynx-eyed.

He uttered no word of surprise, but he could not quite control the muscles of his face, and a momentary light leapt into his eyes. "I wasn't aware Miss Lisle *was* coming," he said.

Lydia believed him. "That's true," she thought, "but you're precious glad." And she added aloud, "Then the pleasure comes all the more unexpected, don't it?" She looked sideways at Percival, and lowered her voice, "P'r'aps Miss Lisle meant a little surprise."

Percival returned her glance with a grave scorn which she hardly understood. "My dinner is ready?" he said. "Thank you, Miss Bryant." And Lydia flounced out of the room, half indignant, half sorrowful. "*He* didn't know—that's true. But *she* knows what she's after very well—don't tell me!" To Lydia, at that moment, it seemed as if every girl must be seeking what she sought. "And I call it very bold of her to come poking herself where she isn't wanted—running after a young man! I'd be ashamed!" A longing to scratch Miss Lisle's face was mixed with a longing to have a good cry, for she was honestly suffering the pangs of unrequited love. It is true that it was not for the first time. The curl, the earrings, the songs, the *Language of Flowers*, had done duty more than once before. But wounds may be painful without being deep, although the fact of these former healings might prevent all fear of any fatal ending to this later love. Lydia was very

unhappy as she went downstairs, though, if another hero could be found, she was perhaps half-conscious that the melancholy part of her present love-story might be somewhat abridged.

The streets seemed changed to Percival as he went back to his work. Their ugliness was as bare and as repulsive as ever, but he understood now that the houses might hold human beings, his brothers and his sisters, since some one roof among them sheltered Judith Lisle. Thus he emerged from the alien swarm amid which he had walked in solitude so many days. Above the dull and miry ways was the beauty of her grey-blue eyes, and the glory of her golden hair. He felt as if a white dove had lighted on the town, yet he laughed at his own feelings, for what did he know of her? He had seen her twice, and her father had swindled him out of his money.

Never had his work seemed so tedious, and never had he hurried so quickly to Bellevue Street, as he did when it was over. The door of No. 13 stood open, and young Lisle stood on the threshold. There was no mistaking him. His face had changed from the beautiful chorister type of two or three years earlier, but Percival thought him handsomer than ever. He ceased his soft whistling, and held out his hand. "Thorne! At last! I was looking out for you the other way."

Thorne could hardly find time to greet him, before he questioned eagerly, "You have really taken the rooms here?"

"Really and truly. What's wrong? Anything against the landlady?"

"No," said Percival. "She's honest enough, and fairly obliging, and all the rest of it. But then your sister is not coming here to live with you as they told me? That was a mistake?"

"Not a bit of it. She's coming—in fact, she's here."

"In Bellevue Street?" Percival looked up and down the dreary thoroughfare. "But, Lisle, what a place to bring her to!"

"Beggars mustn't be choosers," said Bertie. "We are not exactly what you would call rolling in riches just now. And Bellevue Street happens to be about midway between St. Sylvester's and Standon Square, so it will suit us both."

"Standon Square?" Percival repeated.

"Yes. Oh, didn't I tell you? My mother came to school at Brenthill. It was her old schoolmistress we remembered lived here, when we had your letter. So we wrote to her, and the old dear not only promised me some pupils, but it is settled that Judith is to go and teach there every day. Judith thinks we ought to stick to one another—we two."

"You're a lucky fellow," said Percival. "You don't know, and won't know, what loneliness is here."

"But how do *you* come to know anything about it? That's what I can't understand. I thought your grandfather died last summer?"

"So he did."

"But I thought you were to come in for no end of money?"

"I didn't, you see."

"But surely he always allowed you a lot," said Lisle, still unsatisfied. "You never used to talk of doing anything."

"No, but I found I must. The fact is, I'm not on the best terms with my cousin at Brackenhill, and I made up my mind to be independent. Consequently I'm a clerk—a copying clerk, you understand—in a lawyer's office here—Ferguson's in Fisher Street—and I lodge accordingly."

"I'm very sorry," said Bertie.

"Hammond knows all about it," the other went on, "but nobody else does."

"I was afraid there was something wrong," said Bertie; "wrong for you, I mean. From our point of view, it is very lucky that circumstances have sent you here. But I hope your prospects may brighten—not directly, I can't manage to hope that, but soon."

Percival smiled. "Meanwhile," he said, with a quiet earnestness of tone, "if there is anything I can do to help you or Miss Lisle, you will let me do it?"

"Certainly," said Bertie. "We are going out to look for a grocer. Suppose you come and show us one."

"I'm very much at your service. What are you looking at?"

"Why—you'll pardon my mentioning it—you have got the biggest smut on your left cheek that I've seen since I came here. They attain to a remarkable size in Brenthill, have you noticed?" Bertie spoke with eager interest, as if he had become quite a connoisseur in smuts. "Yes, that's it. I'll look Judith up, and tell her you are going with us."

Percival fled upstairs, more discomposed by that unlucky black than he would have thought possible. When he had made sure that he was tolerably presentable, he waited by his open door till his fellow-lodgers appeared, and then stepped out on the landing to meet them. Miss Lisle, dressed very simply in black, stood drawing on her glove. A smile dawned on her face when her eyes met Percival's, and, greeting him in her low distinct tones, she held out her white right hand, still ungloved. He took it with grave reverence, for Judith Lisle had once touched his faint dream of a woman, who should be brave with sweet heroism, tender, and true. They had scarcely exchanged a dozen words in their lives, but he had said to himself, "If I were an artist, I would paint my ideal with a face like that," and the memory, with its underlying poetry, sprang to life again, as his glance encountered hers. Percival felt the vague poem, though Bertie was at his elbow, chattering about shops, and though he himself had hardly got over the intolerable remembrance of that smut.

When they were in the street, Miss Lisle looked eagerly about her, and asked as they turned a corner, "Will this be our way to St. Sylvester's?"

"Yes. I suppose Bertie will make his *début* next Sunday? I must come and hear him."

"Of course you must," said Lisle. "Where do you generally go?"

"Well, for a walk, generally. Sometimes it ends in some outlying church, sometimes not."

"Oh, but it's your duty to attend your parish church when I play there. I suppose St. Sylvester's *is* your parish church?"

"Not a bit of it. St. Andrew's occupies that proud position. I've been there three times, I think."

"And what sort of a place is that?" said Miss Lisle.

"The dreariest, dustiest, emptiest place imaginable," Percival answered, turning quickly towards her. "There's an old clergyman, without a tooth in his head, who mumbles something which the congregation seem to take for granted is the service. Perhaps he means it for that. I don't know. He's the curate, I think, come to help the rector, who is getting just a little past his work. I don't remember that I ever saw the rector."

"But does anyone go?"

"Well, there's the clerk," said Percival, thoughtfully; "and there's a weekly dole of bread left to fourteen poor men, and fourteen poor women, of the parish. They must be of good character, and above the age of sixty-five. It is given away after the afternoon service. When I have been there, there has always been a congregation of thirty, without reckoning the clergyman." He paused in his walk. "Didn't you want a grocer, Miss Lisle? I don't do much of my shopping, but I believe this place is as good as any."

Judith went in, and the two young men waited outside. In something less than half a minute Lisle showed signs of impatience. He inspected the grocer's stock of goods through the window, and extended his examination to a toy-shop beyond, where he seemed particularly interested in a small and curly lamb, which stood in a pasture of green paint, and possessed an underground squeak or baa. Finally he returned to Thorne. "You like waiting, don't you?" he said.

"I don't mind it."

"And I do. That's just the difference. Is there a stationer's handy?"

"At the end of the street, the first turning to the left."

"I want some music paper; I can get it before Judith has done ordering in her supplies, if I go at once."

"Go then; you can't miss it. I'll wait here for Miss Lisle, and we'll come and meet you if you are not back."

When Judith came out, she looked round in some surprise. "What has become of Bertie, Mr. Thorne?"

"Gone to the bookseller's," said Percival; "shall we walk on and meet him?"

They went together down the grey, slushy street. The wayfarers

seemed unusually coarse and jostling that evening, Percival thought, the pavement peculiarly miry, the flaring gaslights very cruel to the unloveliness of the scene.

"Mr. Thorne," Judith began, "I am glad of this opportunity. We haven't met many times before to-day."

"Twice," said Percival.

She looked at him, a faint light of surprise in her eyes. "Ah! twice," she repeated. "But you know Bertie well. You used often to come at one time, when I was away?"

"Oh, yes; I saw a good deal of Bertie," he replied, remembering how he had taken a fancy to the boy.

"And he used to talk to me about you. I don't feel as if we were quite strangers, Mr. Thorne."

"Indeed, I hope not," said Percival, eluding a baker's boy, and reappearing at her side.

"I've another reason for the feeling, too, besides Bertie's talk," she went on. "Once, six or seven years ago, I saw your father. He came in one evening about some business, I think, and I still remember the very tone in which he talked of you. I was only a school-girl then, but I could not help understanding something of what you were to him."

"He was too good to me," said Percival, and his heart was very full. Those bygone days with his father, which had drifted so far into the past, seemed suddenly brought near by Judith's words, and he felt the warmth of the old tenderness once more.

"So I was very glad to find you here," she said. "For Bertie's sake, not for yours. I am so grieved that you should have been so unfortunate." She looked up at him, with eyes which questioned, and wondered, and doubted all at once. But a small girl, staring at the shop-windows, drove a perambulator straight at Percival's legs. With a laugh he stepped into the roadway to escape the peril, and came back.

"Don't grieve about me, Miss Lisle. It couldn't be helped, and I have no right to complain." These were his spoken words; his unspoken thought was that it served him right, for being such a fool as to trust her father. "It's worse for you, I think, and harder," he went on; "and if you are so brave——"

"It's for Bertie if I am," she said quickly; "it is very hard on him. We have spoilt him I'm afraid, and now he will feel it so terribly. For people cannot be the same to us—how should they, Mr. Thorne? Some of our friends have been very good; no one could be kinder than Miss Crawford—but it is a dreadful change for Bertie. And I have been afraid of what he would do if he went where he had no companions. A sister is so helpless. So I was very thankful when your letter came. But I am sorry for you, Mr. Thorne. He told me just now——"

"But, as that can't be helped," said Percival, "be glad for my sake too. I have been very lonely."

She looked up at him, and smiled. "He insisted on going to Bellevue

Street the first thing this morning," she said. "I don't think any other lodgings would have suited him."

"But they are not good enough for you."

"Oh yes, they are, and near Standon Square, too; I shall only have seven or eight minutes' walk to my work. I should not have liked—Oh, here he is! Bertie, this is cool of you, deserting me in this fashion!"

"Why, of course you were all right with Thorne, and he asked me to let him help me in any way he could. I like to take a man at his word."

"By all means take me at mine," said Percival.

"Help you!" said Judith to her brother. "Am I such a terrible burden, then?"

"No," Thorne exclaimed; "Bertie is a clever fellow; he lets me share his privileges first, that I mayn't back out of sharing any troubles later."

"Are you going to save him trouble by making his pretty speeches for him, too?" Judith inquired, with a smile. "You are indeed a friend in need!"

They had turned back, and were walking towards Bellevue Street. As they went into No. 13 they encountered Miss Bryant in the passage. She glanced loftily at Miss Lisle as she swept by, but she turned and fixed a look of reproachful tenderness on Percival Thorne. He knew that he was guiltless in the matter, and yet in Judith's presence he felt guilty and humiliated beneath Lydia's ostentatiously mournful gaze. The idea that she would probably be jealous of Miss Lisle, flashed into his mind, to his utter disgust and dismay. He turned into his own room, and flung himself into a chair, only to find, a few minutes later, that he was staring blankly at Lydia's blue vase. But for the Lisles, he might almost have been driven from Bellevue Street, by its mere presence on the table. It was beginning to haunt him, it mingled in his dreams, and he had drawn its hideous shape, absently, on the edge of his blotting-paper. Let him be where he might, it lay, a light-blue burden, on his mind. It was not the vase only, but he felt that it implied Lydia herself, smile, curl, turquoise earrings and all, and, on the evening of his meeting with Judith Lisle, the thought was doubly hateful.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

LYDIA REARRANGES HER CAP.

THUS, as the days lengthened, and the winter, bitter though it was, began to give faint promise of sunlight to come, Percival entered on his new life, and felt the gladness of returning spring. At the beginning of winter our glances are backward; we are like spendthrifts who have

wasted all in days of bygone splendour. We sit, pinched and poverty-stricken, by our little light of fire and candle, remembering how the whole land was full of warmth and golden gladness, in our lavish prime. But our feelings change as the days grow clear, and keen, and long. This very year has yet to wear its crown of blossom. Its inheritance is to come, and all is fresh and wonderful. We would not ask the bygone summer for one day more, for we have the beauty of promise, instead of that beauty of long triumph, which is heavy and over-ripe; and with March at hand, we cannot desire September.

Percival's new life was cold and stern as the February weather, but it had its flitting gleams of grace and beauty, in brief words, or passing looks, exchanged with Judith Lisle. He was no lover, to pine for more than Fate vouchsafed. It seemed to him that the knowledge that he might see her was almost enough; and it was well it should be so, for he met her very seldom. She went regularly to Standon Square, and came home late and tired. She had one half-holiday in the week, but Miss Crawford had recommended her to a lady, whose eldest girl was dull and backward at her music, and she spent a great part of that afternoon in teaching Janie Barton. Bertie was indignant. "Why should you, who have an ear and a soul for music, be tortured by such an incapable as that? Let them find some one else to teach her."

"And some one else to take the money! Besides, Mrs. Barton is so kind——"

Bertie, who was lying on three chairs in front of the fire, sat up directly, and looked resigned. "That's it—now for it. No one is so good as Mrs. Barton, except Miss Crawford; and no one is anything like Miss Crawford, except Mrs. Barton. Oh, I know! And old Clifton is the first and best of men. And so you lavish your gratitude on them—Judith, *why* are all our benefactors such awful guys?—while they ought to be thanking their stars they've got us!"

"Nonsense, Bertie."

"'Tisn't nonsense. Aren't you better than I am? And old Clifton is very lucky to get such an organist. I think he is thankful, but I wish he wouldn't show it by asking me to tea again."

"Don't complain of Mr. Clifton," said Judith. "You are very fortunate, if you only knew it."

"Am I? Then suppose you go to tea with him, if you are so fond of him. I rather think I shall have a severe cold coming on next Tuesday."

Judith said no more, being tolerably sure that, when Tuesday came, Bertie would go. But she was not quite happy about him. She lived as if she idolized the spoilt boy, but the blindness which makes idolatry joyful was denied to her. So that, though he was her first thought every day of her life, the thought was an anxious one. She was very grateful to Miss Crawford for having given him a chance, so young and untried as he was, but she could only hope that Bertie would not repay her kind-

ness by some thoughtless neglect. At present all had gone well; there could be no question about his abilities, Miss Crawford was satisfied, and the young master got on capitally with his pupils. Neither was Judith happy when he was with Mr. Clifton. Bertie came home to mimic the clergyman with boyish recklessness, and she feared that the same kind of thing went on with some of the choir, behind Mr. Clifton's back. ("Behind his back?" Bertie said one day. "Under his nose, if you like; it would be all one to Clifton.") He frightened her with his carelessness in money matters, and his scarcely concealed contempt for the means by which he lived. "Thank heaven! this hasn't got to last for ever," he said once, when she remonstrated.

"Don't reckon on anything else," she pleaded. "I know what you are thinking of—oh, Bertie, I don't like you to count on that!"

He threw back his head, and laughed. "Well, if that fails, wait and see what I can do for myself."

He looked so bright and daring as he spoke, that she could hardly help sharing his confidence. "Ah! the opera!" she said. "But, Bertie, you must work."

"The opera—yes, of course I will work," Bertie answered. "Now you mention it, it strikes me I may as well have a pipe, and think about it a bit. No time like the present, is there?" So Bertie had his pipe, and a little quiet meditation. There was a lingering smile on his face as if something had amused him. He always felt particularly virtuous when he smoked his pipe, because it was so much more economical than the cigars of his prosperous days. "A penny saved is a penny gained." Bertie felt as if he must be gradually making his fortune, as he leant back, and watched the smoke curl upwards.

And yet, with it all, how could Judith complain? He was the very life of the house, as he ran up and downstairs, filling the dingy passages with melodious singing. He had a bright word for everyone. The grimy little maid-servant would have died for him at a moment's notice. Bertie was always sweet-tempered; in very truth, there was not a touch of bitterness in his nature. And he was so fond of Judith—so proud of her, so thoroughly convinced of her goodness, so sure that he should do great things for her some day—what could she say against him?

Percival, too, was fascinated. His room smelt of Bertie's tobacco, and was littered with blotted manuscripts. He went so regularly to hear Bertie play, that Mr. Clifton noticed the olive-skinned, foreign looking young man, and thought of asking him to join the Guild of St. Sylvester, and take a class in the Sunday-school. Yet Percival also had doubts about the young organist's future. He knew that letters came now and then from New York, which saddened Judith, and brightened Bertie. If Mr. Lisle prospered in America, and summoned his son to share his success, would he have strength to cling to poverty and honour in England? There were times when Percival doubted it. There were times, too, when he doubted whether the boy's musical promise would ever

ripen to worthy fruit, though he was angry with himself for his doubts. "If he triumphs, it will be *her* doing," he thought. Little as he saw of Judith, they were yet becoming friends. You may meet a man every day, and if you only talk to him about the weather, and the leading articles in the *Times*, you may die of old age before you reach friendship. But these two talked of more than the weather. Once, emboldened by her remembrance of old days, he spoke of his father. He hardly noticed at the time that Judith took keen note of something he said of the old squire's utter separation from his son. "I was more Percival than Thorne till I was twenty," said he.

"And are you not more Percival than Thorne still?"

He liked to hear her say "Percival," even thus. "Perhaps," he said. "But it is strange how I've learned to care about Brackenhill; or, rather, it wasn't learning, it came by instinct; and now no place on earth seems like home to me except that old house."

Judith, fair and clear-eyed, leaned against the window, and looked out into the twilight. After a pause, she spoke. "You are fortunate, Mr. Thorne. You can look back happily to your life with your father."

The intention of her speech was evident; so was a weariness which he had sometimes suspected in her voice. He answered her, "And you cannot?"

"No," she said. "I was wondering just now how many people had reason to hate the name of Lisle."

Percival was not unconscious of the humorous side of such a remark, when addressed to himself. But Judith looked at him, almost as if she would surprise his thought.

"Don't dwell on such things," he said. "Men in your father's position speculate, and perhaps hardly know how deeply they are involved, till nothing but a lucky chance will save them, and it seems impossible to do anything but go on. At last the end comes, and it is very terrible. But you can't mend it——"

"No," said Judith. "I can't!"

"Then don't take up a useless burden when you need all your strength. You were not to blame in any way——"

"No," she said again, "I hope not. But it is hard to be so helpless. I do not even know their names. I can only feel as if I ought to be more gentle and more patient with everyone, since anyone may be——"

"Ah, Miss Lisle," said Percival, "you will pay some of the debts unawares, in something better than coin."

She shook her head, but when she looked up at him there was a half smile on her lips. As she moved away, Percival thought of Sissy's old talk about heroic women—"Jael, and Judith, and Charlotte Corday." He felt that this girl would have gone to her death with quiet dignity, had there been need. Godfrey Hammond had called her a plain likeness of her brother, but Percival had seen at the first glance that her face was

worth infinitely more than Bertie's, even in his boyish promise; and an artist would have turned from the brother to the sister, justifying Percival.

It was well for Percival that Judith's friendly smile, and occasional greeting, made bright moments in his life, since he had no more of Lydia's attentions. Poor grimy little Emma waited on him wearily, and always neglected him if the Lisles wanted her. She had apparently laid in an immense stock of goods, for she never went shopping now, but stayed at home, and let his fire out, and was late and slovenly with his meals. There was no great dishonesty, but his tea-caddy was no longer guarded, and provisions ceased to be mysteriously preserved. Miss Bryant seldom met him on the stairs, and when she did, she flounced past him in lofty scorn. Her slighted love had turned to gall. She was bitter in her very desire to convince herself that she had never thought of Mr. Thorne. She neglected to send up his letters; she would not lift a finger to help in getting his dinner ready; and if Emma happened to be out of the way, she would let his bell ring, and take no notice. Yet she would have been very true to him, in her own fashion, if he would have had it so; she would have taken him for better, for worse; would have slaved for him, and fought for him, and never suffered anyone else to find fault with him in any way whatever. But he had not chosen that it should be so, and Lydia had reclaimed her heart, and her pocket edition of the *Language of Flowers*, and now watched Percival and Miss Lisle with spiteful curiosity.

"I shall be late at Standon Square this evening—Miss Crawford wants me," said Judith, one morning, to her brother.

"I'll come and meet you," was his prompt reply. "What time? Don't let that old woman work you into an early grave."

"There's no fear of that. I'm strong, and it won't hurt me. Suppose you come at half-past nine—you must have your tea by yourself I'm afraid."

"That's all right," he answered cheerfully.

"That's all right! What do you mean by that, sir?"

"I mean that I don't at all mind when you don't come back to tea. I think I rather prefer it! There, Miss Lisle!"

"You rude boy!" She felt herself quite justified in boxing his ears.

"Oh, I say! Hold hard—mind my violets!" he exclaimed.

"Your violets? Oh, how sweet they are!" And bending forward, Judith smelt them daintily. "Where did you get them, Bertie?"

"Ah—where?" And Bertie stood before the glass and surveyed himself. The cheap lodging-house mirror cast a greenish shade over his features, but the little bouquet in his button-hole came out very well. "Where did I get them? I didn't buy them, if you mean that. They were given to me."

"Who gave them to you?"

"And then women say it isn't fair to call them curious!" Bertie put his head on one side, dropped his eyelids, looked out of the corners of his eyes, and smiled, fingering an imaginary curl.

"Not that nasty Miss Bryant! She didn't!"

"She did, though!"

"The wretch! Then you shan't wear them one moment more!" Bertie eluded her attack, and stood, laughing, on the other side of the table. "Oh Bertie!" suddenly growing very plaintive, "why did you let me smell the nasty things?"

"They are very nice," said Lisle, looking down at the poor little violets. "Oh, we are great friends, Lydia and I. I shall have buttered toast for tea to-night."

"Buttered toast—what do you mean?"

"Why—it's a curious thing—but Emma—isn't her name Emma?—always has to work like a slave when you go out. I don't know why there should be so much more to do—you don't help her to clean the kettles, or the steps, in the general way, do you? It's a mystery. Anyhow, Lydia has to see after my tea, and then I have buttered toast, or muffins, and rashers of bacon. Lydia's attentions are just a trifle greasy, perhaps, now I come to think of it. But she toasts muffins very well, does that young woman, and makes very good tea too."

"Bertie! I thought you made tea for yourself when I was away."

"Oh, did you? Not I—why should I? I had some of Mrs. Bryant's raspberry jam one night—that wasn't bad, for a change. And once I had some prawns."

"Oh, Bertie! How *could* you?"

"Bless you, my child," said Bertie, "how serious you look! Where's the harm? Do you think I shall make myself ill? By the way, I wonder if Lydia ever made buttered toast for Thorne? I suspect she did, and that he turned up his nose at it. She always holds her head so uncommonly high if his name is mentioned."

"Do throw those violets on the fire," said Judith.

"Indeed I shall do nothing of the kind. I'm coming to Standon Square to give my lessons this morning—with my violets. See if I don't."

The name of Standon Square startled Judith into looking at the time. "I must be off," she said. "Don't be late for the lessons, and oh, Bertie, don't be foolish!"

"All right," he answered gaily. Judith ran downstairs. At the door she encountered Lydia, and eyed her with lofty disapproval. It did not seem to trouble Miss Bryant much. She knew Miss Lisle disliked her, and took it as an inevitable fact, if not an indirect compliment to her conquering charms. So she smiled, and wished Judith good morning. But she had a sweeter smile for Bertie, when a little later, carefully dressed, radiant, handsome, with her violets in his coat, he too went on his way to Standon Square.

If Judith had been in Bellevue Street, when he came back, she might have noticed that the little bouquet was gone. Had it dropped out by accident? Or had Bertie merely defended his violets for fun, and thrown them away as soon as her back was turned? Or what had happened to them? There was no one to inquire.

Young Lisle strolled into Percival's room, and found him just come in, and waiting for his dinner. "I'm going to practise at St. Sylvester's this afternoon," said the young fellow. "What do you say to a walk, as soon as you get away?"

Percival assented, and began to move some of the books and papers which were strewn on the table. Lisle sat on the end of the horsehair sofa, and watched him.

"I can't think how you can endure that blue thing, and those awful flowers, continually before your eyes," he said at last.

Percival shrugged his shoulders. He could not explain to Lisle that to request that Lydia's love-token might be removed, would have seemed to him to be like going down to her level, and rejecting what he preferred to ignore. "What am I to do?" he said. "I believe they think it very beautiful, and I fancy the flowers are home-made. People have different ideas of art, but shall I therefore wound Miss Bryant's feelings?"

"Heaven forbid!" said Bertie. "Did Lydia Bryant make those flowers? How interesting!" He pulled the vase towards him for a closer inspection. There was a crash, and light-blue fragments strewed the floor. Percival, piling his books on the side table, looked round with an exclamation.

"Hullo!" said Lisle, "I've done it! Here's a pretty piece of work! And you so fond of it, too!" He was picking up the flowers as he spoke. "Here, Emma," as the girl opened the door, "I've upset Mr. Thorne's flower-vase. Tell Miss Bryant it was my doing, and I'm afraid it won't mend. Better take up the pieces carefully though, on the chance." This was thoughtful of Bertie, as the bits were remarkably small. "And here are the flowers—all right, I think. Have you got everything?" He held the door open while she went out with her load, and then he came back, rubbing his hands. "Well, are you grateful? You'll never see that again."

Percival surveyed him with a grave smile. "I'm grateful," he said. "But I'd rather you didn't treat all the things which offend my eye, in the same way."

Bertie glanced round at the furniture, cheap, mean, and shabby. "You think I should have too much smashing to do?"

"I fear it might end in my sitting cross-legged on the floor," said Thorne. "And my successor might cavil at Mrs. Bryant's idea of furnished lodgings."

"Well, I know I've done you a good turn to-day," Bertie rejoined. "My conscience approves of my conduct." And he went off, whistling.

Percival, on his way out, met Lydia on the landing. "Miss Bryant, have you a moment to spare?" he said, as she went rustling past.

She stopped, ungraciously.

"The flower-vase on my table is broken. If you can tell me what it cost, I will pay for it."

"Mr. Lisle broke it, didn't he? Emma said——"

"No matter," said Thorne. "It was done in my room. It is no concern of Mr. Lisle's. Can you tell me?"

Lydia hesitated. Should she let him pay for it? Some faint touch of refinement told her that she should not take money, for what she had meant as a love-gift. She looked up, and met the utter indifference of his eyes, as he stood, purse in hand, before her. She was ashamed of the remembrance that she had tried to attract his attention, and burned to deny it.

"Well, then, it was three-and-six," she said.

Percival put the money in her hand. She eyed it discontentedly.

"That's right, isn't it?" he asked, in some surprise.

The touch of the coins recalled to her the pleasure with which she had spent her own three-and-sixpence, to brighten his room, and she half repented. "Oh, it's right enough," she said. "But I don't know why you should pay for it. Things will get knocked over——"

"I beg your pardon—of course I ought to pay for it," he replied, drawing himself up. He spoke the more decidedly that he knew how it was broken. "But, Miss Bryant, it will not be necessary to replace it. I don't think anything of the kind would be very safe in the middle of my table." And with a bow he went on his way.

Lydia stood where he had left her, fingering his half-crown and shilling, with an uneasy sense that there was something very mean about the transaction. Now that she had taken his money she disliked him much more, but, as she *had* taken it, she went away, and bought herself a pair of grass-green gloves. From that time forward she always openly declared that she despised Mr. Thorne.

That evening, when they came back from their walk, Lisle asked his companion to lend him a couple of sovereigns. "You shall have them back to-morrow," he said, airily. Percival assented, as a matter of course. He hardly thought about it at all, and, if he had, he would have supposed that there was something to be paid in Miss Lisle's absence. He had still something left of the small fortune with which he had started. It was very little, but he could manage Bertie's two sovereigns with that, and the money he had laid aside for Mrs. Bryant's weekly bill.

Percival Thorne, always exact in his accounts, supposed that a time was fixed for the repayment of the loan. He did not understand that his debtor was one of those people, who, when they say "I will pay you to-morrow," merely mean "I will not pay you to-day."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Concerning Sissy.

Percival had announced the fact of the Lisles' presence in Bellevue Street to Sissy, in a carefully careless sentence. Sissy read it, and shivered sadly. Then she answered in a peculiarly bright and cheerful letter. "I'm not fit for him," she thought, as she wrote it. "I don't understand him, and I'm always afraid. Even when he loved me best, I felt as if he loved some dream girl, and took me for her in his dream, and would be angry with me when he woke. Miss Lisle would not be afraid. It is the least I can do for Percival, not to stand in the way of his happiness—the least I can do—and oh, how much the hardest!" So she gave Thorne to understand that she was getting on remarkably well.

It was not altogether false. She had fallen from a dizzy height, but she had found something of rest and security in the valley below. And as prisoners, cut off from all the larger interests of their lives, pet the plants and creatures which chance to lighten their captivity, so did Sissy begin to take pleasure in little gaieties, for which she had not cared in old days. She could sleep now at night without apprehension, and she woke refreshed. There was a great blank in her existence, where the thunderbolt fell, but the cloud, which hung so blackly overhead, was gone. The lonely life was sad, but it held nothing quite so dreadful as the fear that a day might come when Percival and his wife would know that they stood on different levels, that she could not see with his eyes, nor understand his thoughts, when he would look at her with sorrowful patience, and she would die slowly of his terrible kindness. The lonely life was sad, but, after all, Sissy Langton would not be twenty-one till April.

Percival read her letter, and asked Godfrey Hammond how she really was. "Tell me the truth," he said; "you know all is over between us. She writes cheerfully. Is she better than she was last year?"

Hammond replied that Sissy was certainly better. "She has begun to go out again, and Fordborough gossip says that there is something between her and young Hardwicke. He is a good fellow, and I fancy the old man will leave him very well off. But she might do better, and there are two people, at any rate, who do not think anything will come of it—myself, and young Hardwicke."

Percival hoped not indeed.

A month later Hammond wrote that there was no need for Percival to excite himself about Henry Hardwicke. Mrs. Falconer had taken Sissy and Laura to a dance at Latimer's Court, and Sissy's conquests were innumerable. Young Walter Latimer and a Captain Fothergill were the most conspicuous victims. "I believe Latimer rides into Fordborough every day, and the Captain, being stationed there, is on the

spot. Our St. Cecilia looks more charming than ever, but what she thinks of all this, no one knows. Of course Latimer would be the better match, as far as money goes; he is decidedly better looking, and, I should say, better tempered; but Fothergill has an air about him which makes his rival look countrified, so I suppose they are tolerably even. Neither is overweighted with brains. What do you think? Young Garnett cannot say a civil word to either of them, and wants to give Sissy a dog. He is not heart-whole either, I take it."

Hammond was trying to probe his correspondent's heart. He flattered himself that he should learn something from Percival, let him answer how he would. But Percival did not answer at all. The fact was, he did not know what to say. It seemed to him that he would give anything to hear that Sissy was happy, and yet——

Nor did Sissy understand herself very well. Her grace and sweetness attracted Latimer and Fothergill, and a certain gentle indifference piqued them. She was not sad, lest sadness should be a reproach to Percival. In truth she hardly knew what she wished. One day she came into the room, and overheard the fag-end of a conversation between Mrs. Middleton and a maiden aunt of Godfrey Hammond's, who had come to spend the day. " You know," said the visitor, " I never could like Mr. Percival Thorne as much as——"

Sissy paused on the threshold, and Miss Hammond stopped short. The colour mounted to her wintry cheek, and she contrived to find an opportunity to apologise, a little later. " I beg your pardon, my dear, for my thoughtless remark just as you came in. I know so little that my opinion was worthless. I really beg your pardon."

" What for?" said Sissy. " For what you said about Percival Thorne? My dear Miss Hammond, people can't be expected to remember *that*. Why, we agreed that it should be all over, and done with, at least a hundred years ago!" She spoke with hurried bravery.

The old lady looked at her, and held out her hands. " My dear, is the time always so long since you parted?"

Sissy put the proffered hands airily aside, and scoffed at the idea. They had a crowd of callers that afternoon, but the girl lingered more than once by Miss Hammond's side, and paid her delicate little attentions. This perplexed young Garnett very much, when he had ascertained, from one of the company, that the old woman had nothing but an annuity of three hundred a year. He hoped that Sissy Langton wasn't a little queer, but, upon his word, it looked like it.

Sainte-Beuve's Critical Method.

Men have frequently imagined themselves wrecked on a desert island, for the purpose of inquiring how they would, under such circumstances, beguile the tedium of existence. They have further assumed that the works of only one writer could be saved from the wreck, and that their insular library would consist of the productions of one mind. Persons of a religious turn have, it goes without saying, pronounced a verdict in favour of the Bible, apparently forgetting that it is the production of various intellects, or perhaps considering that, as it is alli nspired, the authorship may fairly be regarded as single. Others, again, have selected Shakspeare as their one literary companion; and I suppose some people would declare for the collected speeches of the politician they happen to agree with.

I confess my choice would be the works of Sainte-Beuve; and I should be satisfied to be restricted to the *Causeries du Lundi*, bargaining, of course, that I might have the "new series" as well as the first one. I could dispense with the *Poésies Complètes*, though, were the great critic still alive, I would not say so for worlds, for fear of touching the one sore place in his existence that never healed. He shared the first infirmity of noble minds. He began life by wanting to be a poet. But it is easier for the most ill-navigated bark to enter Corinth, than for the best directed talents to secure an original place in the Hall of the Muses, unless they be to the manner born. Sainte-Beuve, Frederick the Great, Richelieu, Earl Russell, Lord Beaconsfield, Bulwer Lytton—the list might be almost indefinitely lengthened—suffered from the same unsatisfied craving. It is a touching circumstance. To be rejected in love is esteemed a hard fate; but to be unhappy in one's first, which is said to be likewise one's last love, is inexpressibly pathetic. The great Lessing, who was also deeply infected with this generous passion, had the manliness to avow that he had been an unsuccessful suitor. "I am not a poet," he bravely said, "though I wish I were. My thoughts are canalised; they do not come bubbling from a native source, and gurgling where they will." The moral elevation of that modest confession would alone entitle Lessing to the loftiest of pedestals, and the homage of mankind. Sainte-Beuve frequently alludes, but with hesitation and almost in a coquettish tone, to his efforts in verse. He must have known, fine critic that he was, that he had many gifts, but not the *mens divinior*; but he nowhere deliberately surrenders the bays. "I have made my collection of poems," he says, in noticing M. Crépet's *chefs-d'œuvre* of French poetry; "and you see I have returned to what was long while my love. For all

of us bearers of burdens, is it not natural that a weight, even though in reality fully as heavy, should seem lighter, if what we carry be roses?"

As a fact, however, Sainte-Beuve passed under the "door of humility," and became a prose writer and a critic pure and simple. In that capacity, he did, it seems to me, work that of its kind is unequalled in interest and merit. He is the best companion I know; and oral conversation should indeed be good to wean us from his *Causeries*. He is an unrivalled talker—with his pen. You will say it is monologue, which, as Byron observed speaking of his father-in-law, "old gentlemen mistake for conversation!" But Sainte-Beuve has nothing of the old gentleman about him, in Byron's sense. He is the perfect gentleman of later middle-life, when judgment and manner are at their best, and when experience comes to the aid of good breeding, and weds abundant matter to a courtly air. Neither are Sainte-Beuve's "talks" like the talk of Macaulay or Lord Brougham. He never dogmatises. It is you who are listening, rather than he who is talking; and a man must be amazingly fond of hearing his own voice or expounding his own opinions, who wants to put in his oar when Sainte-Beuve is evenly and equably skimming along, making no ripple, leaving no trail. If I am asked to describe his style, I cannot. He is almost the only good writer I know who has not got one. Good conversation has no style; and neither has Sainte-Beuve. He is, what he describes himself, a talker. For this specially is to be noted in him, that he never—or at any rate very rarely—soliloquises. You are always before him, and he talks to you, but never at you. He is no rhetorician; no good talker ever is. He never argues; no good talker ever does. I was not thinking of justifying my choice of Sainte-Beuve, as the author I would decide to have on a desert island. I was only trying to describe him as he is. But I perceive I have arrived at an account of him which at any rate explains my preference. On a desert island the most unsociable person would infallibly crave for a companion, and for a companion that would talk. Here is an author who does nothing but talk. There are some writers—writers, no doubt, far greater than Sainte-Beuve can profess to be—who transport you out of this world and above this world, and, as it were, apotheosize the loneliness of your spirit, by taking you into the pure ether of thought and sentiment. Reading Sainte-Beuve one can never feel alone. More than that. It is not only that he talks to you, the individual reader of the moment; he addresses all intelligent and well-bred people, on subjects that interest intelligent and well-bred people, and in a manner that satisfies intelligent and well-bred people. Reading him on a desert island would be the nearest possible equivalent to moving in the best society.

Such is his manner, his style, if you will, though I just now said that he has none. His matter, I submit, equally justifies my imaginary decision. Quite apart from its supernatural advantages, the Bible is a work of stupendous interest. But though it deals with the very begin-

ning of things, it suddenly breaks off eighteen hundred years ago; and a good deal has happened during the last eighteen hundred years which must be pronounced to be exceedingly interesting to the modern mind. One has a great esteem, and a profound reverence for one's grandfather; but one would hardly elect to live with him exclusively and always. Living with the Bible only, would be living with ancestors remoter even than one's grandsires. Shakspeare, no doubt, is for all time. But Shakspeare makes a considerable demand upon his reader. He takes us up to empyrean heights, where we dwell with rapture for awhile, and then confess that we want to descend. He has "taken it out of us;" and the carnal mind needs repose. He confers pleasure such as it is given only to the master-spirits to confer. But master-spirits cannot be our constant companions. Shakspeare himself would have found "always Shakspeare," could there have been a second, a great bore. Sainte-Beuve is neither ancient history, nor finely-touched. He is essentially modern, and, using the word in not too literal a sense, homely. He talks about things and people that everybody cares about, in a manner everybody can appreciate. In fact, his manner would escape them, in their attention to what it is he says. Like Wordsworth's perfect woman, he is not too good for daily food, on a desert island or off it. He never gets away into the air, like Ariel, and bids us follow him, if we would hear him singing. He is an honest pedestrian, though not in the current sense of going ever so many miles an hour. On the contrary, he is essentially a lounger and saunters up and down the gravel-paths of thought and observation at a leisurely pace, his arms crossed behind his back, not swinging at his sides.

I have said he is essentially a modern. But when does modern life begin? No doubt that is rather like the question, Where is the North? which Pope answers so capitally in the *Essay on Man*, or like Sainte-Beuve's own question, on which he has written a charming "Lundi," "Qu'est-ce qu'un Classique?" Still though no one would now-a-days dream of writing down a date—though poor old Rollin would have done so—and saying all this side of it is modern, and all that side ancient history, every one feels there are ancient writers and modern writers, conquerors of old and captains of to-day. Marlborough is a modern, and so is Montaigne. So that we get tolerably far back, even under our nomenclature of modern. Sainte-Beuve has a *Causerie* upon almost every Frenchman or Frenchwoman of eminence in any department of literature or action, since France was properly France, say since the days of Louis XI. What a host of subjects, what a multitude of people are thus given him to discourse about, kings, ministers, poets, soldiers, orators, beauties, great men scarcely yet appreciated, little men who have not even yet found their level, saints, heroes, brilliant impostors, devotees, dramatists, lyrists, satirists, writers of memoirs, memoirs of writers; and there they all are, Monday after Monday, fifty-two of them in every year, for year after year. If you were thrown on a desert

island, how long would you like to live? Say, thirty years. Sainte-Beuve ought to amuse you for all that time. Of course if you gobble up a book as though it were a newspaper or a novel, you might get to the end of him in a year or two. But I fancy Sainte-Beuve would soon cure the reader of the worst and most confirmed of bad habits, of this greedy trick of bolting mental pabulum. His own pace is so measured, that you necessarily end by imitating it. He is a writer to be read slowly, and one "Lundi" ought to be enough for a day. Let us suppose that the whole course was exhausted at the end of five years. Where is the man who could not begin and read them all over again? Fortunately the power of modern memory is limited, and we are not all Macaulays. A "Lundi" not perused for five years, or for even a shorter period than that, is a new "Lundi." At a second reading, moreover, the desert islander might discard the plan of his first reading, which was to read "straight on end," and might dip into the good array of volumes at will. There is matter for all tastes. For it is not only French history, French reigns, French memoirs, French poetry, French wits, coxcombs, and philosophers, that are handled and dissected. Nearly all that Germany has produced in literature worth notice, and much that England has developed, of the same sort, come within the scope of this Monday interlocutor. Thackeray would have it that men of letters are week-day preachers; and certainly most of them are as longsome as any pulpiteer. Some, too, are wearisome, addicted to preaching sermons, as though one day in the week was not enough to be specially set apart for that purpose. Sainte-Beuve never sermonizes; and I doubt if a page of his ever sent the dullest reader to sleep. He is always short, never obscure, and ready to finish sooner than you are. My only fear is that, were one wrecked with him on this supposititious island and had one him alone for company for a dozen years, the cry "a sail, a sail!" would come too late; and we should be restored to the tongues of men only to find them vulgar and tiresome.

But what has all this got to do with Sainte-Beuve's critical method? Something, as you would find out, were you left with all his "Causeries" on a desert island. For he has, or thinks he has, a critical method, though I confess I never found it out till he told me of it himself. I do not speak of any special confidence. He has described this method in one of the "Nouveaux Lundis," and it is abundantly evident that, modest writer as he ostensibly is, he greatly piqued himself on it. I may say at once that I do not set a much higher value on it than I believe one need do on Wordsworth's laws for writing poetry. When Wordsworth wrote beautiful poetry, as we know he continually did, he did so by flinging to the wind what he calls his laws of metrical composition. Sainte-Beuve does pretty much the same with his critical method, and with the men, women, and books he criticises. There is nothing in the world more unsatisfactory and inconclusive than men's explanations about themselves. A living English painter, who, more than all his contemporaries, deserves the designation of a man of genius, when asked to

explain how he paints his pictures, is said invariably to answer, "I really don't know how I do them." That may be exaggeration, and perhaps, to some extent, affectation. But an artist of any sort had better leave explanations of his method to other people.

"I have often," says Sainte-Beuve, "heard modern criticism, and mine in particular, reproached with having no theory, with being altogether historical, altogether individual. Those who treat me with the greatest amount of favour have been pleased to say that I am an excellent judge, but that I am without a code. I have a method, nevertheless, and though it may have had no pre-existence in my own mind, and may not at first have arrived at the condition of a theory, it has shaped itself with me by practice, and a long series of applications of it has only confirmed its value in my eyes."

This is exceedingly precise, and justifies us in inquiring what this method is. Sainte-Beuve does not set it forth with all the exactness the foregoing sentences would cause one to anticipate. But he is, as usual, thoroughly intelligible; and I will endeavour briefly to explain what he designates his system.

Literary production, then, according to Sainte-Beuve, is not something distinct or separable from the writer that produces it and his organisation. One can taste of a work, but it is difficult, if not impossible, to judge it, independently of a knowledge of the man himself. One must say, such a tree produces such fruit. "L'étude littéraire me mène ainsi tout naturellement à l'étude morale."

I am sorry to interrupt the synopsis of Sainte-Beuve's method at this early stage. But is it not necessary to inquire already whether, even in the foregoing few sentences, two assertions are not made, perfectly distinct, with one of which we must necessarily agree, from the other of which we may possibly be compelled to dissent. The man and the work unquestionably are one; just as the man and the fingers, or the man and the eyes, are one. No one would dream of contesting that point. But is it wise, or is it even fair, to judge the work in all, or in part, from the man? *Ex pede Herculem*, it is said; but I dare say there have been some Hercules that had small feet. Far from being able to allow that it is difficult to judge a book of consequence, "independently of one's acquaintance with the man himself," I should rather be disposed to say that this latter knowledge renders it difficult to judge the work "independently." If this were not so, how comes the proverb, that no one is a hero to his own valet? Mr. Carlyle's proffered explanation that it is not because the hero is not a hero, but because the valet is a valet, though ingenious and delightfully epigrammatic, will not hold water. No one knows a man so well as his valet, if the valet has been long enough with him, whether the master be a hero or the reverse.

Thus, on the threshold, I, who have the privilege of remaining anonymous, or the controversy would seem too arrogant, and, were Sainte-Beuve alive, too unequal, venture to raise an objection. Sainte-Beuve

himself was perhaps not insensible to the fact that it might be raised, for he takes care to allow that, where ancient writers are our theme, we are without the means of observation requisite for the employment of his method. That seems to me to be a considerable, not to say a fatal concession. To get hold of the man, he allows, book in hand, is nearly always impossible in the case of the great writers of antiquity, and the utmost our scrutiny can command is a half-broken statue. All that can be done under such circumstances is "to comment on the work, to admire it, and to 'rêver l'auteur et le poète à travers.' I should have thought that was quite enough, and I confess I hardly seem to be reading Sainte-Beuve, or even a critic at all, but rather—shall I say?—some sonorous, plausible, but shallow word-compeller of the type of M. Victor Hugo, when he passes away from the difficulty with a majestic wave of the hand, and the following pretty phrase: "A mighty river, and rarely fordable, separates us from the great men of old. Let us salute them across the stream!" That is very nice. But had anyone else written it, Sainte-Beuve would have been the first man to observe that it is neither "l'étude littéraire" nor "l'étude morale." It would have been more logical and more pertinent to say that we cannot properly estimate the value of the great works of antiquity. But it would not have been true, however much in keeping with "critical method." Were it true, Shakspeare would be the English author whose merits Englishmen would feel the greatest difficulty in deciding.

Sainte-Beuve then goes on to say that he looks forward to the advent of a time when science, having greatly progressed in its career of conquest, there will be formed great families of character, whose principal divisions will be known and determined. In other words, psychology will do for men and women what the conchologist does for shells, though of course not quite so accurately, and subject to greater risks of error; and human society will be one great classified museum, though we presume we shall not be compelled to live in glass cases. Sainte-Beuve, for himself, disclaims any such complete powers of classification; he makes only simple monographs. But he indicates the road, and follows it to the best of his ability.

How, then, whilst waiting for the completion of this magnificent psychological system, which is ultimately to divide us all off into convenient sections and subsections—whereby any intelligent critic will be able to tell at a glance what we are, and what our books necessarily must be—is the intelligent observer to arrive at a proper measure of some superior personage who has written a volume of poems? How is one to proceed, asks Sainte-Beuve, if one is to rid oneself of old-fashioned rhetorical judgments, and to be as little as possible the dupe of phrases, of words, of pretty conventionalities, and the rest?

To know the man himself is, as we have seen, of the utmost importance. But our familiarity with him must not end here, nor, indeed, even begin here. We must first find out, if we can, what is his birthplace,

and what his race. Is he of Saxon descent, or of Norman? Is he a Dane, or is he a Fleming? It is just possible that he may be any two of these, or, indeed, all four; and we suppose the psychology of the future, assisted by mathematics and quantitative analysis, will be able to tell us to a nicety in what proportions he is compounded of all these elements. So much will be allowed for the influence of a grandfather, so much for that of a great-grandmother. "One recognises," says Sainte-Beuve, "and infallibly finds afresh this superior man, in part at least, in his parents, his mother more especially; that parent," he adds, with truly Gallic caution, "which is the more direct and the more certain of the two; in his sisters also, in his brothers, in his children even." Clearly Dickens was not so good a judge of character as he imagined, and he evidently had not got hold of a sound method; for he complained bitterly that when, on one occasion, he allowed a pertinacious American, who afterwards served as excellent "copy," to interview him, the stranger rushed to the window, flung it open, and called out to the people in the street, "You may all come up, and bring your aunts and uncles with you."

"*Cela est très-délicat*," Sainte-Beuve observes, "*et demanderait à être éclairci par des noms propres, par quantité de faits particuliers*," and he proceeds to say that he will illustrate his method by examples. That, at any rate, is a particularly fair method of procedure. He takes the instance of Châteaubriand, who constitutes a peculiarly interesting case, but whom perhaps, I ought to add, Sainte-Beuve did not greatly love. I am not insinuating that Châteaubriand was an estimable or loveable character, for he was not. But I doubt if Sainte-Beuve, or anybody, would be in a better position for taking a fair measure of the literary value of that writer's productions, after becoming thoroughly acquainted with, and minutely dwelling upon the mean and repugnant features in his character. Sainte-Beuve, however, having certain theories respecting Châteaubriand, no doubt in the main sound enough, pounces upon his sisters, and says, "This same Châteaubriand, of whom we were speaking, had a sister who possessed imagination, as he himself said, *sur un fond de bêtise*. There was another sister, who enjoyed an exquisite sensibility, with nothing to correct it. She died mad and killed herself." It is obvious that such sisters as these lend themselves kindly to constructive criticism, and assist a man greatly in applying his method. Sainte-Beuve applies it remorselessly, and no doubt vastly enjoyed doing so in this instance. "The elements which Châteaubriand combined and associated at least in his talent, and which kept up a sort of equilibrium, were separately and disproportionately divided between his sisters." There could not be a politer way of saying that Châteaubriand was an imaginative person, half bête, half-lunatic. But we think Sainte-Beuve would have arrived at this conclusion concerning him without any assistance from his sisters.

Sainte-Beuve expresses his regret that he did not know the sisters

of Lamartine. But he appears to think that his "method" is greatly fortified by citing an accidental *mot* of Royer-Collard, who did know them, and who spoke of them, when in the beauty of their youth, as something charming and melodious, like a nest of nightingales. That is a very pretty idea; but we fear the sisters of poets are not always nightingales, nor the brothers of a nest of nightingales always poets. Madame Surville, the sister of Balzac, and who resembled him in appearance to a striking degree, might almost have justified people, observes Sainte-Beuve with complimentary tartness, in their extravagant admiration for the novelist himself. Beaumarchais, too, it would appear, had a sister of the most sprightly wit, which she pushed to the very limits of decency. Sainte-Beuve accepts all this on the testimony of another, and draws the dashing conclusion, "C'était bien la sœur de Figaro, le même jet et la même sève." If methods could be formed and defended on such evidence as this, we could all afford to have our methods.

Other examples follow, and they are just as interesting and just as inconclusive as those we have quoted. "Has it not been the same," asks our critic, "in our time, with certain daughters of poets, who have helped me better to comprehend and represent the poet their father? At times I have thought to catch in them again the enthusiasm, the warmth of soul, some of the leading paternal characteristics in fine, in a condition of purity and integrity, and, so to speak, embalmed in virtue." Charmingly gallant, all that; and it is only in a fit of gallantry towards the female sex that we should find this sober and unenthusiastic Frenchman thus expressing himself. But he seemed to be aware that such language, though highly agreeable, is not particularly critical; and he hastened to add: "C'est assez indiquer ma pensée, et je n'abuserai pas." It seems to me that this is as much as to say, "There is something in my method, is there not? but perhaps not very much."

But Sainte-Beuve's critical method has not yet been fully set forth. A distinguished writer must be studied not only in his grandmother, his sisters, or his daughters; we must examine him in his comrades, in his rivals, in his chosen adversaries, in the people he admires or dislikes. Moreover, we must scrutinize him in his dawn, in his full mid-day, and, alas! in his decline. Here we seem to get upon somewhat safer ground, for we are dealing with the man himself and not with his relatives. No doubt it is eminently characteristic of a man what associates he chooses, what foes he selects, for this is all his own doing; but no one chooses his own grandfather or even his own offspring. Probably, if men could be said to choose their own wives—"avec pleine connaissance de cause"—the wives of great men would be the most instructive comment on their characters. Unfortunately, like other mortals they choose a pair of eyes, a well-turned head, a Juno-like figure, or a tender voice; and their spouses may have a host of qualities peculiarly distasteful to them. Upon safer ground, too, we seem to be standing, when Sainte-Beuve tells us that a critic may reap a world of instruction concerning an author by

noticing, firstly, whom he imitates; and, secondly, who imitate him. Indeed, what he says upon this point is so admirable and so much in his best manner, that I will take the liberty of translating the passage:—

"One may, up to a certain point, study certain talents in their moral posterity, in their disciples, and natural admirers; it is a last means of easy and convenient observation. Affinities openly proclaim or subtlely betray themselves; genius is a king that calls into being its own people. Apply that to Lamartine, to Hugo, to Michelet, to Balzac, to Musset. Enthusiastic admirers are somewhat of accomplices; they are worshipping themselves, their own virtues and their own defects, in their great representative. Tell me who admires you and whom you admire, and I will tell you what you are. But it is indispensable to discern, in the case of each famous author, his true natural public, and to separate this original nucleus—which bears the stamp of the master—from the *banal* public and that mob of vulgar admirers who go about repeating everything said by their neighbour. The disciples who imitate the style and taste of their model in composition are very curious to note, and the most fit in their turn to throw light upon him. As a rule, the disciple overloads or parodies his master without suspecting it. If the school be an elegant one, he enfeebles him; if it be picturesque and crude, he travesties him and exaggerates his manner to excess. The mirror is a magnifying one. There are days, too, when the disciple is warm and sincere, and when one might easily deceive oneself and be tempted to exclaim—parodying the ancient epigram, 'O Châteaubriand! O Salvandy! which of the two has imitated the other?' Change the names and put in their stead yet more modern ones if you like, but the epigram is eternally true. When the master is negligent and when the disciple is careful and dresses himself in his best, on those days when Châteaubriand works amiss and Marchandy does his best, they wear a false aspect of each other. A little way off, behind and by moonlight, one may be excused for mistaking them."

This is excellently well said, and I am sure Sainte-Beuve diverted himself much in writing it, for it combines the most profound ill-nature with the most consummate good-breeding. Satisfied, however, with launching this penetrating shaft, he straightway recurs, with his wonderful dexterity, to more amiable utterances. Disciples, he says, are not always necessarily copyists; and, even in literature pure and simple, there are pupils who improve upon their master.

If the admiration which an author excites in certain minds affords many hints to a judicious critic, the dislike and antipathy he arouses in others is, says Sainte-Beuve, equally instructive. There is a natural antagonism between certain families and groups of intellect, and other families and groups. "How prevent it? It is in the blood, in the temperament, in the first line taken up—which often does not depend on the man who takes it. When it is not a matter of sheer envy, it is an affair of race hatred. How oblige Boileau to admire Quinault, Fonte-

nelle to hold Boileau in great esteem, and Joseph de Maistre or Montalembert to feel affection for Voltaire?"

It will be seen that Sainte-Beuve does not stick very rigorously to his text, which, it will be remembered, was his critical method or code; but he is, perhaps, all the more agreeable and interesting in consequence. Indeed, it is only by reading each sentence in this remarkable exposition with the most exact care that one perceives both the drift of his argument and its weak points. See with what apparent negligence he slips in the following sentences just before those I lately cited:—

"Nothing serves better to mark the limitations of some particular talent, to circumscribe its sphere and its domain, than to know the exact point at which revolt against it commences; that in itself is piquant to watch and observe. A man is often detested in the world of letters all his life, without ever being seen."

I wonder if Sainte-Beuve was aware of the important bearing of this last observation, at once so shrewd and so true, upon the principles of his critical method. I will endeavour to show briefly that it seals its condemnation.

"Many a man is hated all his life in the world of letters, without ever having been seen." Quite so. But why? For two reasons, it seems to me. Firstly, because the world of letters, like any other world, resents an exhibition of indifference to itself and its existence, and is quick to ascribe what may be only a noble passion for solitude and meditation to a haughty disdain for others. It has been justly observed that you had better do a man a serious injury than wound his vanity. It is with the world, and any particular world, as it is with men. Worlds, and the world of letters in a striking degree, are exceedingly touchy, and will not stand being ignored. For an author of distinction never to be seen is for him to be infected with a host of faults which will always be believed precisely because they cannot be verified. No doubt, if he mixes freely with his kind, he will be sure, if he be a man of any consequence or strength of character, to make a certain number of enemies; and these will malign him, and will be as little particular in discerning whether he really be the detestable fellow they affirm as though they had never seen him. But he will, at the same time, secure to himself an equal number of friends, who will perhaps be more active and more successful in maintaining his reputation than his enemies in assailing it. Thus, his being seen, to use Sainte-Beuve's phrase, will be of advantage to him, unless he be a really and irrevocably detestable person.

These are the two reasons which render the observations I have cited, and affirm to be so important, both shrewd and true. But I venture to ask if it follows from them, that a man's works can be more fairly estimated when he himself is known and seen? It is perfectly true that a man's poems, or whatever they are, will not be fairly weighed, and will, perhaps, scarcely be weighed at all, so long as he is alive, but refuses to live in the midst of the weighers. They will be fairly weighed, let me

add, when he is no longer seen, because he is dead and can no longer be seen, and the vainest and most sensitive of critical circles can no longer be angry because he does not appear before them. But whilst he yet perambulates this egotistical and exacting planet, is it not plain that his daily appearance among his contemporaries will operate as a continual bias, in one direction or the other, upon those who sit in judgment on his works? How often is it that the just judge is found, who, though he detests the author, belauds the work, or loves the writer and damns his book? On two separate occasions, the writer of this paper "hinted a fault" in the performances of men whose intimacy was much prized by him. His candour nearly cost him two of his most valued friends. I suppose human nature is like that; and there's an end on't. Men—men living together, dining together, clubbing together—cannot afford to tell the truth about each other in print. Of course, if they dislike each other, and, what is pretty certain, each other's works as well, they can afford to say so in terms of as much exaggeration as they like to employ. But that is not telling the truth, either. The late Lord Lytton was not far wrong when he said:—"All public praise is private friendship!" He might have supplemented the observation with the remark, "All public detraction, when it goes beyond a certain point, is private malignity."

I submit, therefore, that the more a man is known as a man and an individual, the less chance is there of his works being fairly measured. The man himself—or what is supposed to be the man himself—is being continually thrust into the page, to discolour its sentiments, to distort its meaning, to obscure its patent drift. If the critic be a friend, he will find each passage heightened in beauty and merit by the recollection of the man who wrote it. If he be other than a friend, each metaphor will become confused, and each simile trite, in the darkening shadow of their objectionable author.

But perhaps the author's grandmothers, sisters, aunts, and nieces can help us here? To put the question is to answer it. They can help in the same sense that all facts help a man who has got a theory, and has not the smallest intention of surrendering it. If one grandmother will not do, perhaps the other will; and if the miscreant poet had a sister who deserved to be canonized, perhaps he had another who broke all the commandments, the eleventh included. The more convenient sister of the two will be taken, and the other left; or should both have been models of propriety, the methodical critic will indeed be unfortunate if a niece or a cousin cannot be hunted up somewhere to corroborate a foregone conclusion.

And this is the critical method of, in my opinion, the greatest and most delightful of modern critics. "Save me from my friends," is a common observation. "Save me from myself!" would be yet more to the purpose. Happily, Sainte-Beuve saves himself; for just as Wordsworth, when duly inspired, forgot all about his principles of poetic

composition, so Sainte-Beuve, in all, or nearly all, his great critical judgments, ceases to potter among uncles, and aunts, and grandchildren, and goes straight to the author's nearest and truest relatives, his works themselves.

For this, I submit, is the true critical method, and the only sound and secure one. If a critic happens to know anything personal about his author, let him try to forget it. Happy Virgil! Happy Shakspeare! We know nothing about either of your great-grandmothers and precious little more about yourselves. Possibly one was a bit of a courtier, and the other no end of a sad dog. But we don't know; and accordingly we read of the praises of Augustus, and Mæcenas, and Marcellus with charmed ears; and we peruse *Romeo and Juliet*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Venus and Adonis*, and even the *Sonnets* themselves, without turning up the whites of our eyes and wishing it was always Sunday. The best criticism, like the best poetry, is objective. I would say to the critic, as I would to the poet, "Mind you don't analyse over much. Look straight at the object, and tell us about it, just as it is, without too much subtle sentiment or too much recondite reasoning. Leave the man's grandmother alone, and his wife, and even his neighbour's wife. The loves of the poets may be very interesting; but the most interesting thing about them, at least to the robust and candid mind, is what they have said, and how they have said it! To keep before you eternally all that gossip and detraction, and envy, and even strict truth, have ransacked concerning the poet, is to hamper and cloud your judgment concerning the poem. And as of poems, so of all other productions—histories, philosophies, statues, pictures, operas. Deal with these on their own merits. Look straight at the performance; purge yourself of your prejudices, and struggle to be candid. That is the only system, the only critical method, worth a rush."

A. A.

The English Admirals.

"Whether it be wise in men to do such actions or no, I am sure it is so in States to honour them."—*Sir William Temple.*

THERE is one story of the wars of Rome which I have always very much envied for England. Germanicus was going down at the head of the legions into a dangerous river—on the opposite bank the woods were full of Germans—when there flew out seven great eagles which seemed to marshal the Romans on their way; they did not pause or waver, but disappeared into the forest where the enemy lay concealed. "Forward!" cried Germanicus, with a fine rhetorical inspiration. "Forward! and follow the Roman birds." It would be a very heavy spirit that did not give a leap at such a signal, and a very timorous one that continued to have any doubt of success. To appropriate the eagles as fellow-countrymen was to make imaginary allies of the forces of nature; the Roman Empire and its military fortunes, and along with these the prospects of those individual Roman legionaries now fording a river in Germany, looked altogether greater and more hopeful. It is a kind of illusion easy to produce. A particular shape of cloud, the appearance of a particular star, the holiday of some particular saint, anything in short to remind the combatants of patriotic legends or old successes, may be enough to change the issue of a pitched battle; for it gives to the one party a feeling that Right and the larger interests are with them.

If an Englishman wishes to have such a feeling, it must be about the sea. The lion is nothing to us; he has not been taken to the hearts of the people, and naturalised as an English emblem. We know right well that a lion would fall foul of us as grimly as he would of a Frenchman or a Moldavian Jew, and we do not carry him before us in the smoke of battle. But the sea is our approach and bulwark; it has been the scene of our greatest triumphs and dangers, and we are accustomed in lyrical strains to claim it as our own. The prostrating experiences of foreigners between Calais and Dover have always an agreeable side to English prepossessions. A man from Bedfordshire, who doesn't know one end of the ship from the other until she begins to move, swaggers among such persons with a sense of hereditary nautical experience. To suppose yourself endowed with natural parts for the sea because you are the countryman of Blake and mighty Nelson, is perhaps just as unwarrantable as to imagine Scotch extraction a sufficient guarantee that you will look well in a kilt. But the feeling is there, and seated beyond the reach of argument. We should consider ourselves unworthy of our descent if we did not share the arrogance of our progenitors, and please ourselves with the pretension that the sea is English. Even where it is

looked upon by the guns and battlements of another nation we regard it as a kind of English cemetery, where the bones of our seafaring fathers take their rest until the last trumpet; for I suppose no other nation has lost as many ships, or sent as many brave fellows to the bottom.

There is nowhere such a background for heroism as the noble, terrifying, and picturesque conditions of some of our sea fights. Hawke's battle in the tempest, and Aboukir at the moment when the French Admiral blew up, reach the limit of what is imposing to the imagination. And our naval annals owe some of their interest to the fantastic and beautiful appearance of old war-ships and the romance that invests the sea and everything sea-going in the eyes of English lads on a half-holiday at the coast. Nay, and what we know of the misery between decks enhances the bravery of what was done by giving it something for contrast. We like to know that these bold and honest fellows contrived to live, and to keep bold and honest, among absurd and vile surroundings. No reader can forget the description of the *Thunder* in *Roderick Random*: the disorderly tyranny; the cruelty and dirt of officers and men; deck after deck, each with some new object of offence; the hospital, where the hammocks were huddled together with but fourteen inches space for each; the cockpit, far under water, where, "in an intolerable stench," the spectacled steward kept the accounts of the different messes; and the canvas enclosure, six feet square, in which Morgan made flip and salmagundi, smoked his pipe, sang his Welsh songs, and swore his queer Welsh imprecations. There are portions of this business on board the *Thunder* over which the reader passes lightly and hurriedly, like a traveller in a malarious country. It is easy enough to understand the opinion of Dr. Johnson: "Why, sir," he said, "no man will be a sailor who has contrivance enough to get himself into a jail." You would fancy anyone's spirit would die out under such an accumulation of darkness, noisomeness, and injustice, above all when he had not come there of his own free will, but under the cutlasses and bludgeons of the press-gang. But perhaps a watch on deck in the sharp sea air put a man on his mettle again; a battle must have been a capital relief; and prize-money, bloodily earned and grossly squandered, opened the doors of the prison for a twinkling. Somehow or other, at least, this worst of possible lives could not overlie the spirit and gaiety of our sailors; they did their duty as though they had some interest in the fortunes of that country which so cruelly oppressed them, they served their guns merrily when it came to fighting, and they had the readiest ear for a bold, honourable sentiment, of any class of men the world ever produced.

Most men of high destinies have high-sounding names. Pym and Habakkuk may do pretty well, but they must not think to cope with the Cromwells and Isaiahs. And you could not find a better case in point than that of the English Admirals. Drake and Rooke and Hawke are picked names for men of execution. Frobisher, Rodney, Boscawen, Foul-Weather Jack Byron, are all good to catch the eye in a page of naval history. Cloudesley Shovel is a mouthful of quaint and sounding

syllables. Benbow has a bulldog quality that suits the man's character, and it takes us back to those English archers who were his true comrades for plainness, tenacity, and pluck. Raleigh is spirited and martial, and signifies an act of bold conduct in the field. It is impossible to judge of Blake or Nelson, no names current among men being worthy of such heroes. But still it is odd enough, and very appropriate in this connection, that the latter was greatly taken with his Sicilian title. "The signification, perhaps, pleased him," says Southey; "Duke of Thunder was what in Dahomey would have been called a *strong name;* it was to a sailor's taste, and certainly to no man could it be more applicable." Admiral in itself is one of the most satisfactory of distinctions, it has a noble sound and a very proud history; and Columbus thought so highly of it, that he enjoined his heirs to sign themselves by that title as long as the house should last.

But it is the spirit of the men, and not their names, that I wish to speak about in this paper. That spirit is truly English; they, and not Tennyson's cotton-spinners or Mr. D'Arcy Thompson's Abstract Bagman, are the true and typical Englishmen. There may be more *head* of bagmen in the country, but human beings are reckoned by number only in political constitutions. And the Admirals are typical in the full force of the word. They are splendid examples of virtue, indeed, but of a virtue in which most Englishmen can claim a moderate share; and what we admire in their lives is a sort of apotheosis of ourselves. Almost everybody in our land, except humanitarians and a few persons whose youth has been depressed by exceptionally æsthetic surroundings, can understand and sympathise with an Admiral or a prize-fighter. I do not wish to bracket Benbow and Tom Cribb; but, depend upon it, they are practically bracketed for admiration in the minds of many frequenters of ale-houses. If you told them about Germanicus and the eagles, or Regulus going back to Carthage, they would very likely fall asleep; but tell them about Harry Pearce and Jem Belcher, or about Nelson and the Nile, and they put down their pipes to listen. I have by me a copy of *Boxiana*, on the fly-leaves of which a youthful member of the fancy kept a chronicle of remarkable events and an obituary of great men. Here we find piously chronicled the demise of jockeys, watermen, and pugilists—Johnny Moore, of the Liverpool Prize Ring; Tom Spring, aged fifty-six; "Pierce Egan, senior, writer of *Boxiana* and other sporting works"—and among all these, the Duke of Wellington! If Benbow had lived in the time of this annalist, do you suppose his name would not have been added to the glorious roll? In short, we do not all feel warmly towards Wesley or Laud, we cannot all take pleasure in *Paradise Lost*; but there are certain common sentiments and touches of nature by which the whole nation is made to feel kinship. A little while ago everybody, from Hazlitt and John Wilson down to the imbecile creature who scribbled his register on the fly-leaves of *Boxiana*, felt a more or less shamefaced satisfaction in the exploits of prize-fighters. And the exploits of the Admirals are popular to the same degree, and

tell in all ranks of society. Their sayings and doings stir English blood like the sound of a trumpet; and if the Indian Empire, the trade of London, and all the outward and visible ensigns of our greatness should pass away, we should still leave behind us a durable monument of what we were in these sayings and doings of the English Admirals.

Duncan, lying off the Texel with his own flag-ship, the *Venerable*, and only one other vessel, heard that the whole Dutch fleet was putting to sea. He told Captain Hotham to anchor alongside of him in the narrowest part of the channel, and fight his vessel till she sank. "I have taken the depth of the water," added he, "and when the *Venerable* goes down, my flag will still fly." And you observe this is no naked Viking in a prehistoric period; but a Scotch member of Parliament, with a smattering of the classics, a telescope, a cocked hat of great size, and flannel underclothing. In the same spirit, Nelson went into Aboukir with six colours flying; so that even if five were shot away, it should not be imagined he had struck. He too must needs wear his four stars outside his Admiral's frock, to be a butt for sharpshooters. "In honour I gained them," he said to objectors, adding with sublime illogicality, "in honour I will die with them." Captain Douglas of the *Royal Oak*, when the Dutch fired his vessel in the Thames, sent his men ashore, but was burned along with her himself rather than desert his post without orders. Just then, perhaps the Merry Monarch was chasing a moth round the supper-table with the ladies of his court. When Raleigh sailed into Cadiz, and all the forts and ships opened fire on him at once, he scorned to shoot a gun, and made answer with a flourish of insulting trumpets. I like this bravado better than the wisest dispositions to insure victory; it comes from the heart and goes to it. God has made nobler heroes, but he never made a finer gentleman than Walter Raleigh. And as our Admirals were full of heroic superstitions, and had a strutting and vainglorious style of fight, so they discovered a startling eagerness for battle, and courted war like a mistress. When the news came to Essex before Cadiz that the attack had been decided, he threw his hat into the sea. It is in this way that a schoolboy hears of a half-holiday; but this was a bearded man of great possessions who had just been allowed to risk his life. Benbow could not lie still in his bunk after he had lost his leg; he must be on deck in a basket to direct and animate the fight. I said they loved war like a mistress; yet I think there are not many mistresses we should continue to woo under similar circumstances. Trowbridge went ashore with the *Culloden*, and was able to take no part in the battle of the Nile. "The merits of that ship and her gallant captain," wrote Nelson to the Admiralty, "are too well known to benefit by anything I could say. Her misfortune was great in getting aground, *while her more fortunate companions were in the full tide of happiness.*" This is a notable expression, and depicts the whole great-hearted, big-spoken stock of the English Admirals to a hair. It was to be "in the full tide of happiness" for Nelson to destroy five thousand five hundred and twenty-five of his fellow-creatures, and have his own scalp torn open by a piece

of langridge shot. Hear him again at Copenhagen: "A shot through the mainmast knocked the splinters about; and he observed to one of his officers with a smile, 'It is warm work, and this day may be the last to any of us at a moment;' and then, stopping short at the gangway, added, with emotion, '*But, mark you—I would not be elsewhere for thousands.*'"

I must tell one more story, which has lately been made familiar to us all. Sir Richard Greenville was Vice-Admiral to Lord Thomas Howard, and lay off the Azores with the English squadron in 1591. He was a noted tyrant to his crew: a dark, bullying fellow apparently; and it is related of him that he would chew and swallow wineglasses, by way of convivial levity, till the blood ran out of his mouth. When the Spanish fleet of fifty sail came within sight of the English, his ship, the *Revenge*, was the last to weigh anchor, and was so far circumvented by the Spaniards, that there were but two courses open—either to turn her back upon the enemy or sail through one of his squadrons. The first alternative Greenville dismissed as dishonourable to himself, his country, and her Majesty's ship. Accordingly, he chose the latter, and steered into the Spanish armament. Several vessels he forced to luff and fall under his lee; until, about three o'clock of the afternoon, a great ship of three decks of ordnance took the wind out of his sails, and immediately boarded. Thenceforward, and all night long, the *Revenge* held her own single-handed against the Spaniards. As one ship was beaten off, another took its place. She endured, according to Raleigh's computation, "eight hundred shot of great artillery, besides many assaults and entries." By morning the powder was spent, the pikes all broken, not a stick was standing, "nothing left overhead either for flight or defence;" six feet of water in the hold; almost all the men hurt; and Greenville himself in a dying condition. To bring them to this pass, a fleet of fifty sail had been mauling them for fifteen hours, the *Admiral of the Hulks* and the *Ascension* of Seville had both gone down alongside, and two other vessels had taken refuge on shore in a sinking state. In Hawke's words, they had "taken a great deal of drubbing." The captain and crew thought they had done about enough; but Greenville was not of this opinion; he gave orders to the master gunner, whom he knew to be a fellow after his own stamp, to scuttle the *Revenge* where she lay. The others, who were not mortally wounded like the Admiral, interfered with some decision, locked the master gunner into his cabin, after having deprived him of his sword, for he manifested an intention to kill himself if he were not to sink the ship; and sent to the Spaniards to demand terms. These were granted. The second or third day after, Greenville died of his wounds aboard the Spanish flag-ship, leaving his contempt upon the "traitors and dogs" who had not chosen to do as he did, and engage fifty vessels, well found and fully manned, with six inferior craft ravaged by sickness and short of stores. He at least, he said, had done his duty as he was bound to do, and looked for everlasting fame.

Someone said to me the other day that they considered this story to

be of a pestilent example. I am not inclined to imagine we shall ever be put into any practical difficulty from a superfluity of Greenvilles. And besides, I demur to the opinion. The worth of such actions is not a thing to be decided in a quaver of sensibility or a flush of righteous common-sense. The man who wished to make the ballads of his country, coveted a small matter compared to what Richard Greenville accomplished. I wonder how many people have been inspired by this mad story, and how many battles have been actually won for England in the spirit thus engendered. It is only with a measure of habitual foolhardiness that you can be sure, in the common run of men, of courage on a reasonable occasion. An army or a fleet, if it is not led by quixotic fancies, will not be led far by terror of the Provost Marshal. Even German warfare, in addition to maps and telegraphs, is not above employing the *Wacht am Rhein*. Nor is it only in the profession of arms that such stories may do good to a man. In this desperate and gleeful fighting, whether it is Greenville or Benbow, Hawke or Nelson, who flies his colours in the ship, we see men brought to the test and giving proof of what we call heroic feeling. Prosperous humanitarians tell me, in my club smoking-room, that they are a prey to prodigious heroic feelings, and that it costs them more nobility of soul to do nothing in particular, than would carry on all the wars, by sea or land, of bellicose humanity. It may very well be so, and yet not touch the point in question. For what I desire is to see some of this nobility brought face to face with me in an inspiriting achievement. A man may talk smoothly over a cigar in my club smoking-room from now to the Day of Judgment, without adding anything to mankind's treasury of illustrious and encouraging examples. It is not over the virtues of a curate-and-tea-party novel, that people are abashed into high resolutions. It may be because their hearts are crass, but to stir them properly they must have men entering into glory with some pomp and circumstance. And that is why these stories of our sea-captains, printed, so to speak, in capitals, and full of bracing moral influence, are more valuable to England than any material benefit in all the books of political economy between Westminster and Birmingham. Greenville chewing wine-glasses at table makes no very pleasant figure, any more than a thousand other artists when they are viewed in the body, or met in private life; but his work of art, his finished tragedy, is an eloquent performance; and I contend it ought not only to enliven men of the sword as they go into battle, but send back merchant clerks with more heart and spirit to their book-keeping by double entry.

There is another question which seems bound up in this; and that is Temple's problem: whether it was wise of Douglas to burn with the *Royal Oak*? and by implication, what it was that made him do so? Many will tell you it was the desire of fame.

"To what do Cæsar and Alexander owe the infinite grandeur of their renown, but to fortune? How many men has she extinguished in the beginning of their progress, of whom we have no knowledge; who brought as

much courage to the work as they, if their adverse hap had not cut them off in the first sally of their arms? Amongst so many and so great dangers, I do not remember to have anywhere read that Cæsar was ever wounded; a thousand have fallen in less dangers than the least of these he went through. A great many brave actions must be expected to be performed without witness, for one that comes to some notice. A man is not always at the top of a breach, or at the head of an army in the sight of his general, as upon a platform. He is often surprised between the hedge and the ditch; he must run the hazard of his life against a henroost; he must dislodge four rascally musketeers out of a barn; he must prick out single from his party, as necessity arises, and meet adventures alone."

Thus far Montaigne, in a characteristic essay on *Glory*. Where death is certain, as in the cases of Douglas or Greenville, it seems all one from a personal point of view. The man who lost his life against a henroost, is in the same pickle with him who lost his life against a fortified place of the first order. Whether he has missed a peerage or only the corporal's stripes, it is all one if he has missed them and is quietly in the grave. It was by a hazard that we learned the conduct of the four marines of the *Wager*. There was no room for these brave fellows in the boat, and they were left behind upon the island to a certain death. They were soldiers, they said, and knew well enough it was their business to die; and as their comrades pulled away, they stood upon the beach, gave three cheers, and cried "God bless the king!" Now, one or two of those who were in the boat escaped, against all likelihood, to tell the story. That was a great thing for us; but surely it cannot, by any possible twisting of human speech, be construed into anything great for the marines. You may suppose, if you like, that they died hoping their behaviour would not be forgotten; or you may suppose they thought nothing on the subject, which is much more likely. What can be the signification of the word "fame" to a private of marines, who cannot read and knows nothing of past history beyond the reminiscences of his grandmother? But whichever supposition you make, the fact is unchanged. They died while the question still hung in the balance; and I suppose their bones were already white, before the winds and the waves and the humour of Indian chiefs and Spanish governors had decided whether they were to be unknown and useless martyrs or honoured heroes. Indeed, I believe this is the lesson: if it is for fame that men do brave actions, they are only silly fellows after all.

It is at best but a pettifogging, pickthank business to decompose actions into little personal motives, and explain heroism away. The Abstract Bagman will grow like an Admiral at heart, not by ungrateful carping, but in a heat of admiration. But there is another theory of the personal motive in these fine sayings and doings, which I believe to be true and wholesome. People usually do things, and suffer martyrdoms, because they have an inclination that way. The best artist is not the man who fixes his eye on posterity, but the one who loves the practice of his art. And instead of having a taste for being successful merchants and retiring

at thirty, some people have a taste for high and what we call heroic forms of excitement. If the Admirals courted war like a mistress; if, as the drum beat to quarters, the sailors came gaily out of the forecastle; it is because a fight is a period of multiplied and intense experiences, and, by Nelson's computation, worth "thousands" to any one who has a heart under his jacket. If the marines of the *Wager* gave three cheers and cried "God bless the king," it was because they liked to do things nobly for their own satisfaction. They were giving their lives, there was no help for that; and they made it a point of self-respect to give them handsomely. And there were never four happier marines in God's world than these four at that moment. If it was worth thousands to be at the Baltic, I wish a Benthamite arithmetician would calculate how much it was worth to be one of these four marines; or how much their story is worth to each of us who read it. And mark you, undemonstrative men would have spoiled the situation. The finest action is the better for a piece of purple. If the soldiers of the *Birkenhead* had not gone down in line, or these marines of the *Wager* had walked away simply into the island, like plenty of other brave fellows in the like circumstances, my Benthamite arithmetician would assign a far lower value to the two stories. We have to desire a grand air in our heroes; and such a knowledge of the human stage as shall make them put the dots on their own i's, and leave us in no suspense as to when they mean to be heroic. And hence, we should congratulate ourselves upon the fact that our admirals were not only great-hearted but big-spoken.

The heroes themselves say, as often as not, that fame is their object; but I do not think that is much to the purpose. People generally say what they have been taught to say; that was the catchword they were given in youth to express the aims of their way of life; and men who are gaining great battles are not likely to take much trouble in reviewing their sentiments and the words in which they were told to express them. Almost every person, if you will believe himself, holds a quite different theory of life from the one on which he is patently acting. And the fact is, fame may be a forethought and an afterthought, but it is too abstract an idea to move people greatly in moments of swift and momentous decision. It is from something more immediate, some determination of blood to the head, some trick of the fancy, that the breach is stormed or the bold word spoken. I am sure a fellow shooting an ugly weir in a canoe has exactly as much thought about fame as most commanders going into battle; and yet the action, fall out how it will, is not one of those the muse delights to celebrate. Indeed it is difficult to see why the fellow does a thing so nameless and yet so formidable to look at, unless on the theory that he likes it. I suspect that is why; and I suspect it is at least ten per cent. of why Lord Beaconsfield and Mr. Gladstone have debated so much in the House of Commons, and why Burnaby rode to Khiva the other day, and why the Admirals courted war like a mistress.

R. L. S.

Daisy Miller: a Study.

In Two Parts.

PART II.

Winterbourne, who had returned to Geneva the day after his excursion to Chillon, went to Rome towards the end of January. His aunt had been established there for several weeks, and he had received a couple of letters from her. "Those people you were so devoted to last summer at Vevey have turned up here, courier and all," she wrote. "They seem to have made several acquaintances, but the courier continues to be the most *intime*. The young lady, however, is also very intimate with some third-rate Italians, with whom she rackets about in a way that makes much talk. Bring me that pretty novel of Cherbuliez's—'Paule Méré'—and don't come later than the 23rd."

In the natural course of events, Winterbourne, on arriving in Rome, would presently have ascertained Mrs. Miller's address at the American banker's, and have gone to pay his compliments to Miss Daisy. "After what happened at Vevey I think I may certainly call upon them," he said to Mrs. Costello.

"If, after what happens—at Vevey and everywhere—you desire to keep up the acquaintance, you are very welcome. Of course a man may know every one. Men are welcome to the privilege!"

"Pray what is it that happens—here, for instance?" Winterbourne demanded.

"The girl goes about alone with her foreigners. As to what happens further, you must apply elsewhere for information. She has picked up half-a-dozen of the regular Roman fortune-hunters, and she takes them about to people's houses. When she comes to a party she brings with her a gentleman with a good deal of manner and a wonderful moustache."

"And where is the mother?"

"I haven't the least idea. They are very dreadful people."

Winterbourne meditated a moment. "They are very ignorant—very innocent only. Depend upon it they are not bad."

"They are hopelessly vulgar," said Mrs. Costello. "Whether or no being hopelessly vulgar is being 'bad' is a question for the metaphysicians. They are bad enough to dislike, at any rate; and for this short life that is quite enough."

The news that Daisy Miller was surrounded by half-a-dozen wonder-

ful moustaches checked Winterbourne's impulse to go straightway to see her. He had perhaps not definitely flattered himself that he had made an ineffaceable impression upon her heart, but he was annoyed at hearing of a state of affairs so little in harmony with an image that had lately flitted in and out of his own meditations; the image of a very pretty girl looking out of an old Roman window and asking herself urgently when Mr. Winterbourne would arrive. If, however, he determined to wait a little before reminding Miss Miller of his claims to her consideration, he went very soon to call upon two or three other friends. One of these friends was an American lady who had spent several winters at Geneva, where she had placed her children at school. She was a very accomplished woman, and she lived in the Via Gregoriana. Winterbourne found her in a little crimson drawing-room, on a third floor; the room was filled with southern sunshine. He had not been there ten minutes when the servant came in, announcing "Madame Mila!" This announcement was presently followed by the entrance of little Randolph Miller, who stopped in the middle of the room and stood staring at Winterbourne. An instant later his pretty sister crossed the threshold; and then, after a considerable interval, Mrs. Miller slowly advanced.

"I know you!" said Randolph.

"I'm sure you know a great many things," exclaimed Winterbourne, taking him by the hand. "How is your education coming on?"

Daisy was exchanging greetings very prettily with her hostess; but when she heard Winterbourne's voice she quickly turned her head. "Well, I declare!" she said.

"I told you I should come, you know," Winterbourne rejoined, smiling.

"Well—I didn't believe it," said Miss Daisy.

"I am much obliged to you," laughed the young man.

"You might have come to see me!" said Daisy.

"I arrived only yesterday."

"I don't believe that!" the young girl declared.

Winterbourne turned with a protesting smile to her mother; but this lady evaded his glance, and, seating herself, fixed her eyes upon her son. "We've got a bigger place than this," said Randolph. "It's all gold on the walls."

Mrs. Miller turned uneasily in her chair. "I told you if I were to bring you, you would say something!" she murmured.

"I told *you*!" Randolph exclaimed. "I tell *you*, sir!" he added jocosely, giving Winterbourne a thump on the knee. "It *is* bigger, too!"

Daisy had entered upon a lively conversation with her hostess; Winterbourne judged it becoming to address a few words to her mother. "I hope you have been well since we parted at Vevey," he said.

Mrs. Miller now certainly looked at him—at his chin. "Not very well, sir," she answered.

"She's got the dyspepsia," said Randolph. "I've got it too. Father's got it. I've got it most!"

This announcement, instead of embarrassing Mrs. Miller, seemed to relieve her. "I suffer from the liver," she said. "I think it's this climate; it's less bracing than Schenectady, especially in the winter season. I don't know whether you know we reside at Schenectady. I was saying to Daisy that I certainly hadn't found anyone like Dr. Davis, and I didn't believe I should. Oh, at Schenectady, he stands first; they think everything of him. He has so much to do, and yet there was nothing he wouldn't do for me. He said he never saw anything like my dyspepsia, but he was bound to cure it. I'm sure there was nothing he wouldn't try. He was just going to try something new when we came off. Mr. Miller wanted Daisy to see Europe for herself. But I wrote to Mr. Miller that it seems as if I couldn't get on without Dr. Davis. At Schenectady he stands at the very top; and there's a great deal of sickness there, too. It affects my sleep."

Winterbourne had a good deal of pathological gossip with Dr. Davis's patient, during which Daisy chattered unremittingly to her own companion. The young man asked Mrs Miller how she was pleased with Rome. "Well, I must say I am disappointed," she answered. "We had heard so much about it; I suppose we had heard too much. But we couldn't help that. We had been led to expect something different."

"Ah, wait a little, and you will become very fond of it," said Winterbourne.

"I hate it worse and worse every day!" cried Randolph.

"You are like the infant Hannibal," said Winterbourne.

"No, I ain't!" Randolph declared, at a venture.

"You are not much like an infant," said his mother. "But we have seen places," she resumed, "that I should put a long way before Rome." And in reply to Winterbourne's interrogation, "There's Zurich," she concluded; "I think Zurich is lovely; and we hadn't heard half so much about it."

"The best place we've seen is the City of Richmond!" said Randolph.

"He means the ship," his mother explained. "We crossed in that ship. Randolph had a good time on the City of Richmond."

"It's the best place I've seen," the child repeated. "Only it was turned the wrong way."

"Well, we've got to turn the right way some time," said Mrs. Miller, with a little laugh. Winterbourne expressed the hope that her daughter at least found some gratification in Rome, and she declared that Daisy was quite carried away. "It's on account of the society—the society's splendid. She goes round everywhere; she has made a great number of acquaintances. Of course she goes round more than I do. I must say they have been very sociable; they have taken her right in. And then she knows a great many gentlemen. Oh, she thinks there's nothing like

Rome. Of course, it's a great deal pleasanter for a young lady if she knows plenty of gentlemen."

By this time Daisy had turned her attention again to Winterbourne. "I've been telling Mrs. Walker how mean you were!" the young girl announced.

"And what is the evidence you have offered?" asked Winterbourne, rather annoyed at Miss Miller's want of appreciation of the zeal of an admirer who on his way down to Rome had stopped neither at Bologna nor at Florence, simply because of a certain sentimental impatience. He remembered that a cynical compatriot had once told him that American women—the pretty ones, and this gave a largeness to the axiom—were at once the most exacting in the world and the least endowed with a sense of indebtedness.

"Why, you were awfully mean at Vevey," said Daisy. "You wouldn't do anything. You wouldn't stay there when I asked you."

"My dearest young lady," cried Winterbourne, with eloquence, "have I come all the way to Rome to encounter your reproaches?"

"Just hear him say that!" said Daisy to her hostess, giving a twist to a bow on this lady's dress. "Did you ever hear anything so quaint?"

"So quaint, my dear?" murmured Mrs. Walker, in the tone of a partisan of Winterbourne.

"Well, I don't know," said Daisy, fingering Mrs. Walker's ribbons. "Mrs. Walker, I want to tell you something."

"Motherr," interposed Randolph, with his rough ends to his words, "I tell you you've got to go. Eugenio 'll raise something!"

"I'm not afraid of Eugenio," said Daisy, with a toss of her head. "Look here, Mrs. Walker," she went on, "you know I'm coming to your party."

"I am delighted to hear it."

"I've got a lovely dress."

"I am very sure of that."

"But I want to ask a favour—permission to bring a friend."

"I shall be happy to see any of your friends," said Mrs. Walker, turning with a smile to Mrs. Miller.

"Oh, they are not my friends," answered Daisy's mamma, smiling shyly, in her own fashion. "I never spoke to them!"

"It's an intimate friend of mine—Mr. Giovanelli," said Daisy, without a tremor in her clear little voice or a shadow on her brilliant little face.

Mrs. Walker was silent a moment, she gave a rapid glance at Winterbourne. "I shall be glad to see Mr. Giovanelli," she then said.

"He's an Italian," Daisy pursued, with the prettiest serenity. "He's a great friend of mine—he's the handsomest man in the world—except Mr. Winterbourne! He knows plenty of Italians, but he wants to know some Americans. He thinks ever so much of Americans. He's tremendously clever. He's perfectly lovely!"

It was settled that this brilliant personage should be brought to Mrs. Walker's party, and then Mrs. Miller prepared to take her leave. "I guess we'll go back to the hotel," she said.

"You may go back to the hotel, mother, but I'm going to take a walk," said Daisy.

"She's going to walk with Mr. Giovanelli," Randolph proclaimed.

"I am going to the Pincio," said Daisy, smiling.

"Alone, my dear—at this hour?" Mrs. Walker asked. The afternoon was drawing to a close—it was the hour for the throng of carriages and of contemplative pedestrians. "I don't think it's safe, my dear," said Mrs. Walker.

"Neither do I," subjoined Mrs. Miller. "You'll get the fever as sure as you live. Remember what Dr. Davis told you!"

"Give her some medicine before she goes," said Randolph.

The company had risen to its feet; Daisy, still showing her pretty teeth, bent over and kissed her hostess. "Mrs. Walker, you are too perfect," she said. "I'm not going alone; I am going to meet a friend."

"Your friend won't keep you from getting the fever," Mrs. Miller observed.

"Is it Mr. Giovanelli?" asked the hostess.

Winterbourne was watching the young girl; at this question his attention quickened. She stood there smiling and smoothing her bonnet ribbons; she glanced at Winterbourne. Then, while she glanced and smiled, she answered without a shade of hesitation, "Mr. Giovanelli—the beautiful Giovanelli."

"My dear young friend," said Mrs. Walker, taking her hand, pleadingly, "don't walk off to the Pincio at this hour to meet a beautiful Italian."

"Well, he speaks English," said Mrs. Miller.

"Gracious me!" Daisy exclaimed, "I don't want to do anything improper. There's an easy way to settle it." She continued to glance at Winterbourne. "The Pincio is only a hundred yards distant, and if Mr. Winterbourne were as polite as he pretends he would offer to walk with me!"

Winterbourne's politeness hastened to affirm itself, and the young girl gave him gracious leave to accompany her. They passed downstairs before her mother, and at the door Winterbourne perceived Mrs. Miller's carriage drawn up, with the ornamental courier whose acquaintance he had made at Vevey seated within. "Good-by, Eugenio!" cried Daisy, "I'm going to take a walk." The distance from the Via Gregoriana to the beautiful garden at the other end of the Pincian Hill is, in fact, rapidly traversed. As the day was splendid, however, and the concourse of vehicles, walkers, and loungers numerous, the young Americans found their progress much delayed. This fact was highly agreeable to Winterbourne, in spite of his consciousness of his singular situation. The slow-moving, idly-gazing Roman crowd bestowed much attention upon the

extremely pretty young foreign lady who was passing through it upon his arm; and he wondered what on earth had been in Daisy's mind when she proposed to expose herself, unattended, to its appreciation. His own mission, to her sense, apparently, was to consign her to the hands of Mr. Giovanelli; but Winterbourne, at once annoyed and gratified, resolved that he would do no such thing.

"Why haven't you been to see me?" asked Daisy. "You can't get out of that."

"I have had the honour of telling you that I have only just stepped out of the train."

"You must have stayed in the train a good while after it stopped!" cried the young girl, with her little laugh. "I suppose you were asleep. You have had time to go to see Mrs. Walker."

"I knew Mrs. Walker—" Winterbourne began to explain.

"I knew where you knew her. You knew her at Geneva. She told me so. Well, you knew me at Vevey. That's just as good. So you ought to have come." She asked him no other question than this; she began to prattle about her own affairs. "We've got splendid rooms at the hotel; Eugenio says they're the best rooms in Rome. We are going to stay all winter—if we don't die of the fever; and I guess we'll stay then. It's a great deal nicer than I thought; I thought it would be fearfully quiet; I was sure it would be awfully poky. I was sure we should be going round all the time with one of those dreadful old men that explain about the pictures and things. But we only had about a week of that, and now I'm enjoying myself. I know ever so many people, and they are all so charming. The society's extremely select. There are all kinds—English, and Germans, and Italians. I think I like the English best. I like their style of conversation. But there are some lovely Americans. I never saw anything so hospitable. There's something or other every day. There's not much dancing; but I must say I never thought dancing was everything. I was always fond of conversation. I guess I shall have plenty at Mrs. Walker's—her rooms are so small." When they had passed the gate of the Pincian Gardens, Miss Miller began to wonder where Mr. Giovanelli might be. "We had better go straight to that place in front," she said, "where you look at the view."

"I certainly shall not help you to find him," Winterbourne declared.

"Then I shall find him without you," said Miss Daisy.

"You certainly won't leave me!" cried Winterbourne.

She burst into her little laugh. "Are you afraid you'll get lost—or run over? But there's Giovanelli, leaning against that tree. He's staring at the women in the carriages: did you ever see anything so cool?"

Winterbourne perceived at some distance a little man standing with folded arms, nursing his cane. He had a handsome face, an artfully poised hat, a glass in one eye and a nosegay in his button-hole. Winterbourne looked at him a moment and then said, "Do you mean to speak to that man?"

"Do I mean to speak to him? Why, you don't suppose I mean to communicate by signs?"

"Pray understand, then," said Winterbourne, "that I intend to remain with you."

Daisy stopped and looked at him, without a sign of troubled consciousness in her face; with nothing but the presence of her charming eyes and her happy dimples. "Well, she's a cool one!" thought the young man.

"I don't like the way you say that," said Daisy. "It's too imperious."

"I beg your pardon if I say it wrong. The main point is to give you an idea of my meaning."

The young girl looked at him more gravely, but with eyes that were prettier than ever. "I have never allowed a gentleman to dictate to me, or to interfere with anything I do."

"I think you have made a mistake," said Winterbourne. "You should sometimes listen to a gentleman—the right one."

Daisy began to laugh again. "I do nothing but listen to gentlemen!" she exclaimed. "Tell me if Mr. Giovanelli is the right one?"

The gentleman with the nosegay in his bosom had now perceived our two friends, and was approaching the young girl with obsequious rapidity. He bowed to Winterbourne as well as to the latter's companion; he had a brilliant smile, an intelligent eye; Winterbourne thought him not a bad-looking fellow. But he nevertheless said to Daisy—"No, he's not the right one."

Daisy evidently had a natural talent for performing introductions; she mentioned the name of each of her companions to the other. She strolled along with one of them on each side of her; Mr. Giovanelli, who spoke English very cleverly—Winterbourne afterwards learned that he had practised the idiom upon a great many American heiresses—addressed her a great deal of very polite nonsense; he was extremely urbane, and the young American, who said nothing, reflected upon that profundity of Italian cleverness which enables people to appear more gracious in proportion as they are more acutely disappointed. Giovanelli, of course, had counted upon something more intimate; he had not bargained for a party of three. But he kept his temper in a manner which suggested far-stretching intentions. Winterbourne flattered himself that he had taken his measure. "He is not a gentleman," said the young American; "he is only a clever imitation of one. He is a music-master, or a penny-a-liner, or a third-rate artist. Damn his good looks!" Mr. Giovanelli had certainly a very pretty face; but Winterbourne felt a superior indignation at his own lovely fellow-countrywoman's not knowing the difference between a spurious gentleman and a real one. Giovanelli chattered and jested and made himself wonderfully agreeable. It was true that if he was an imitation the imitation was brilliant. "Nevertheless," Winterbourne said to himself, "a nice girl ought to

know!" And then he came back to the question whether this was in fact a nice girl. Would a nice girl—even allowing for her being a little American flirt—make a rendezvous with a presumably low-lived foreigner? The rendezvous in this case, indeed, had been in broad daylight, and in the most crowded corner of Rome; but was it not impossible to regard the choice of these circumstances as a proof of extreme cynicism? Singular though it may seem, Winterbourne was vexed that the young girl, in joining her *amoroso*, should not appear more impatient of his own company, and he was vexed because of his inclination. It was impossible to regard her as a perfectly well-conducted young lady; she was wanting in a certain indispensable delicacy. It would therefore simplify matters greatly to be able to treat her as the object of one of those sentiments which are called by romancers "lawless passions." That she should seem to wish to get rid of him would help him to think more lightly of her, and to be able to think more lightly of her would make her much less perplexing. But Daisy, on this occasion, continued to present herself as an inscrutable combination of audacity and innocence.

She had been walking some quarter of an hour, attended by her two cavaliers, and responding in a tone of very childish gaiety, as it seemed to Winterbourne, to the pretty speeches of Mr. Giovanelli, when a carriage that had detached itself from the revolving train drew up beside the path. At the same moment Winterbourne perceived that his friend Mrs. Walker—the lady whose house he had lately left—was seated in the vehicle and was beckoning to him. Leaving Miss Miller's side, he hastened to obey her summons. Mrs. Walker was flushed; she wore an excited air. "It is really too dreadful," she said. "That girl must not do this sort of thing. She must not walk here with you two men. Fifty people have noticed her."

Winterbourne raised his eyebrows. "I think it's a pity to make too much fuss about it."

"It's a pity to let the girl ruin herself!"

"She is very innocent," said Winterbourne.

"She's very crazy!" cried Mrs. Walker. "Did you ever see anything so imbecile as her mother? After you had all left me, just now, I could not sit still for thinking of it. It seemed too pitiful, not even to attempt to save her. I ordered the carriage and put on my bonnet, and came here as quickly as possible. Thank heaven, I have found you!"

"What do you propose to do with us?" asked Winterbourne, smiling.

"To ask her to get in, to drive her about here for half-an-hour, so that the world may see she is not running absolutely wild, and then to take her safely home."

"I don't think it's a very happy thought," said Winterbourne; "but you can try."

Mrs. Walker tried. The young man went in pursuit of Miss Miller, who had simply nodded and smiled at his interlocutor in the carriage,

and had gone her way with her companion. Daisy, on learning that Mrs. Walker wished to speak to her, retraced her steps with a perfect good grace and with Mr. Giovanelli at her side. She declared that she was delighted to have a chance to present this gentleman to Mrs. Walker. She immediately achieved the introduction, and declared that she had never in her life seen anything so lovely as Mrs. Walker's carriage-rug.

"I am glad you admire it," said this lady, smiling sweetly. "Will you get in and let me put it over you?"

"Oh, no, thank you," said Daisy. "I shall admire it much more as I see you driving round with it."

"Do get in and drive with me," said Mrs. Walker.

"That would be charming, but it's so enchanting just as I am!" and Daisy gave a brilliant glance at the gentlemen on either side of her.

"It may be enchanting, dear child, but it is not the custom here," urged Mrs. Walker, leaning forward in her victoria with her hands devoutly clasped.

"Well, it ought to be, then!" said Daisy. "If I didn't walk I should expire."

"You should walk with your mother, dear," cried the lady from Geneva, losing patience.

"With my mother dear!" exclaimed the young girl. Winterbourne saw that she scented interference. "My mother never walked ten steps in her life. And then, you know," she added with a laugh, "I am more than five years old."

"You are old enough to be more reasonable. You are old enough, dear Miss Miller, to be talked about."

Daisy looked at Mrs. Walker, smiling intensely. "Talked about? What do you mean?"

"Come into my carriage and I will tell you."

Daisy turned her quickened glance again from one of the gentlemen beside her to the other. Mr. Giovanelli was bowing to and fro, rubbing down his gloves and laughing very agreeably; Winterbourne thought it a most unpleasant scene. "I don't think I want to know what you mean," said Daisy presently. "I don't think I should like it."

Winterbourne wished that Mrs. Walker would tuck in her carriage-rug and drive away; but this lady did not enjoy being defied, as she afterwards told him. "Should you prefer being thought a very reckless girl?" she demanded.

"Gracious!" exclaimed Daisy. She looked again at Mr. Giovanelli, then she turned to Winterbourne. There was a little pink flush in her cheek; she was tremendously pretty. "Does Mr. Winterbourne think," she asked slowly, smiling, throwing back her head and glancing at him from head to foot, "that—to save my reputation—I ought to get into the carriage?"

Winterbourne coloured; for an instant he hesitated greatly. It

seemed so strange to hear her speak that way of her "reputation." But he himself, in fact, must speak in accordance with gallantry. The finest gallantry, here, was simply to tell her the truth; and the truth, for Winterbourne, as the few indications I have been able to give have made him known to the reader, was that Daisy Miller should take Mrs. Walker's advice. He looked at her exquisite prettiness; and then he said very gently, "I think you should get into the carriage."

Daisy gave a violent laugh. "I never heard anything so stiff! If this is improper, Mrs. Walker," she pursued, "then I am all improper, and you must give me up. Good-by; I hope you'll have a lovely ride!" and, with Mr. Giovanelli, who made a triumphantly obsequious salute, she turned away.

Mrs. Walker sat looking after her, and there were tears in Mrs. Walker's eyes. "Get in here, sir," she said to Winterbourne, indicating the place beside her. The young man answered that he felt bound to accompany Miss Miller; whereupon Mrs. Walker declared that if he refused her this favour she would never speak to him again. She was evidently in earnest. Winterbourne overtook Daisy and her companion and, offering the young girl his hand, told her that Mrs. Walker had made an imperious claim upon his society. He expected that in answer she would say something rather free, something to commit herself still further to that "recklessness" from which Mrs. Walker had so charitably endeavoured to dissuade her. But she only shook his hand, hardly looking at him; while Mr. Giovanelli bade him farewell with a too-emphatic flourish of the hat.

Winterbourne was not in the best possible humour as he took his seat in Mrs. Walker's victoria. "That was not clever of you," he said candidly, while the vehicle mingled again with the throng of carriages.

"In such a case," his companion answered, "I don't wish to be clever, I wish to be *earnest!*"

"Well, your earnestness has only offended her and put her off."

"It has happened very well," said Mrs. Walker. "If she is so perfectly determined to compromise herself, the sooner one knows it the better; one can act accordingly."

"I suspect she meant no harm," Winterbourne rejoined.

"So I thought a month ago. But she has been going too far."

"What has she been doing?"

"Everything that is not done here. Flirting with any man she could pick up; sitting in corners with mysterious Italians; dancing all the evening with the same partners; receiving visits at eleven o'clock at night. Her mother goes away when visitors come."

"But her brother," said Winterbourne, laughing, "sits up till midnight."

"He must be edified by what he sees. I'm told that at their hotel every one is talking about her, and that a smile goes round among all the servants when a gentleman comes and asks for Miss Miller."

"The servants be hanged!" said Winterbourne angrily. "The poor girl's only fault," he presently added, "is that she is very uncultivated."

"She is naturally indelicate," Mrs. Walker declared. "Take that example this morning. How long had you known her at Vevey?"

"A couple of days."

"Fancy, then, her making it a personal matter that you should have left the place!"

Winterbourne was silent for some moments, then he said, "I suspect, Mrs. Walker, that you and I have lived too long at Geneva!" And he added a request that she should inform him with what particular design she had made him enter her carriage.

"I wished to beg you to cease your relations with Miss Miller—not to flirt with her—to give her no further opportunity to expose herself—to let her alone, in short."

"I'm afraid I can't do that," said Winterbourne. "I like her extremely."

"All the more reason that you shouldn't help her to make a scandal."

"There shall be nothing scandalous in my attentions to her."

"There certainly will be in the way she takes them. But I have said what I had on my conscience," Mrs. Walker pursued. "If you wish to rejoin the young lady I will put you down. Here, by-the-way, you have a chance."

The carriage was traversing that part of the Pincian Garden that overhangs the wall of Rome and overlooks the beautiful Villa Borghese. It is bordered by a large parapet, near which there are several seats. One of the seats, at a distance, was occupied by a gentleman and a lady, towards whom Mrs. Walker gave a toss of her head. At the same moment these persons rose and walked towards the parapet. Winterbourne had asked the coachman to stop; he now descended from the carriage. His companion looked at him a moment in silence; then, while he raised his hat, she drove majestically away. Winterbourne stood there; he had turned his eyes towards Daisy and her cavalier. They evidently saw no one; they were too deeply occupied with each other. When they reached the low garden-wall they stood a moment looking off at the great flat-topped pine-clusters of the Villa Borghese; then Giovanelli seated himself, familiarly, upon the broad ledge of the wall. The western sun in the opposite sky sent out a brilliant shaft through a couple of cloud-bars, whereupon Daisy's companion took her parasol out of her hands and opened it. She came a little nearer and he held the parasol over her; then, still holding it, he let it rest upon her shoulder, so that both of their heads were hidden from Winterbourne. This young man lingered a moment, then he began to walk. But he walked —not towards the couple with the parasol; towards the residence of his aunt, Mrs. Costello.

He flattered himself on the following day that there was no smiling

among the servants when he, at least, asked for Mrs. Miller at her hotel. This lady and her daughter, however, were not at home; and on the next day after, repeating his visit, Winterbourne again had the misfortune not to find them. Mrs. Walker's party took place on the evening of the third day, and in spite of the frigidity of his last interview with the hostess Winterbourne was among the guests. Mrs. Walker was one of those American ladies who, while residing abroad, make a point, in their own phrase, of studying European society; and she had on this occasion collected several specimens of her diversely-born fellow-mortals to serve, as it were, as text-books. When Winterbourne arrived Daisy Miller was not there, but in a few moments he saw her mother come in alone, very shyly and ruefully. Mrs. Miller's hair above her exposed-looking temples was more frizzled than ever. As she approached Mrs. Walker, Winterbourne also drew near.

"You see I've come all alone," said poor Mrs. Miller. "I'm so frightened; I don't know what to do; it's the first time I've ever been to a party alone—especially in this country. I wanted to bring Randolph or Eugenio, or someone, but Daisy just pushed me off by myself. I ain't used to going round alone."

"And does not your daughter intend to favour us with her society?" demanded Mrs. Walker, impressively.

"Well, Daisy's all dressed," said Mrs. Miller, with that accent of the dispassionate, if not of the philosophic, historian with which she always recorded the current incidents of her daughter's career. "She got dressed on purpose before dinner. But she's got a friend of hers there; that gentleman—the Italian—that she wanted to bring. They've got going at the piano; it seems as if they couldn't leave off. Mr. Giovanelli sings splendidly. But I guess they'll come before very long," concluded Mrs. Miller hopefully.

"I'm sorry she should come—in that way," said Mrs. Walker.

"Well, I told her that there was no use in her getting dressed before dinner if she was going to wait three hours," responded Daisy's mamma. "I didn't see the use of her putting on such a dress as that to sit round with Mr. Giovanelli."

"This is most horrible!" said Mrs. Walker, turning away and addressing herself to Winterbourne. "*Elle s'affiche*. It's her revenge for my having ventured to remonstrate with her. When she comes I shall not speak to her."

Daisy came after eleven o'clock, but she was not, on such an occasion, a young lady to wait to be spoken to. She rustled forward in radiant loveliness, smiling and chattering, carrying a large bouquet and attended by Mr. Giovanelli. Everyone stopped talking, and turned and looked at her. She came straight to Mrs. Walker. "I'm afraid you thought I never was coming, so I sent mother off to tell you. I wanted to make Mr. Giovanelli practise some things before he came; you know he sings beautifully, and I want you to ask him to sing. This is Mr.

Giovanelli; you know I introduced him to you; he's got the most lovely voice and he knows the most charming set of songs. I made him go over them this evening, on purpose; we had the greatest time at the hotel." Of all this Daisy delivered herself with the sweetest, brightest audibleness, looking now at her hostess and now round the room, while she gave a series of little pats, round her shoulders, to the edges of her dress. "Is there anyone I know?" she asked.

"I think everyone knows you!" said Mrs. Walker pregnantly, and she gave a very cursory greeting to Mr. Giovanelli. This gentleman bore himself gallantly. He smiled and bowed and showed his white teeth, he curled his moustaches and rolled his eyes, and performed all the proper functions of a handsome Italian at an evening party. He sang, very prettily, half-a-dozen songs, though Mrs. Walker afterwards declared that she had been quite unable to find out who asked him. It was apparently not Daisy who had given him his orders. Daisy sat at a distance from the piano, and though she had publicly, as it were, professed a high admiration for his singing, talked, not inaudibly, while it was going on.

"It's a pity these rooms are so small; we can't dance," she said to Winterbourne as if she had seen him five minutes before.

"I am not sorry we can't dance," Winterbourne answered; "I don't dance."

"Of course you don't dance; you're too stiff," said Miss Daisy. "I hope you enjoyed your drive with Mrs. Walker."

"No, I didn't enjoy it; I preferred walking with you."

"We paired off, that was much better," said Daisy. "But did you ever hear anything so cool as Mrs. Walker's wanting me to get into her carriage and drop poor Mr. Giovanelli, and under the pretext that it was proper? People have different ideas! It would have been most unkind; he had been talking about that walk for ten days."

"He should not have talked about it at all," said Winterbourne; "he would never have proposed to a young lady of this country to walk about the streets with him."

"About the streets?" cried Daisy, with her pretty stare. "Where then would he have proposed to her to walk? The Pincio is not the streets, either; and I, thank goodness, am not a young lady of this country. The young ladies of this country have a dreadfully poky time of it, so far as I can learn; I don't see why I should change my habits for *them*."

"I am afraid your habits are those of a flirt," said Winterbourne gravely.

"Of course they are," she cried, giving him her little smiling stare again. "I'm a fearful, frightful flirt! Did you ever hear of a nice girl that was not? But I suppose you will tell me now that I am not a nice girl."

"You're a very nice girl, but I wish you would flirt with me and me only," said Winterbourne.

"Ah! thank you, thank you very much; you are the last man I should think of flirting with. As I have had the pleasure of informing you, you are too stiff."

"You say that too often," said Winterbourne.

Daisy gave a delighted laugh. "If I could have the sweet hope of making you angry, I should say it again."

"Don't do that; when I am angry I'm stiffer than ever. But if you won't flirt with me, do cease at least to flirt with your friend at the piano; they don't understand that sort of thing here."

"I thought they understood nothing else!" exclaimed Daisy.

"Not in young unmarried women."

"It seems to me much more proper in young unmarried women than in old married ones," Daisy declared.

"Well," said Winterbourne, "when you deal with natives you must go by the custom of the place. Flirting is a purely American custom; it doesn't exist here. So when you show yourself in public with Mr. Giovanelli and without your mother——"

"Gracious! poor mother!" interposed Daisy.

"Though you may be flirting, Mr. Giovanelli is not; he means something else."

"He isn't preaching, at any rate," said Daisy with vivacity. "And if you want very much to know, we are neither of us flirting, we are too good friends for that; we are very intimate friends."

"Ah!" rejoined Winterbourne, "if you are in love with each other it is another affair."

She had allowed him up to this point to talk so frankly that he had no expectation of shocking her by this ejaculation; but she immediately got up, blushing visibly, and leaving him to exclaim mentally that little American flirts were the queerest creatures in the world. "Mr. Giovanelli, at least," she said, giving her interlocutor a single glance, "never says such very disagreeable things to me."

Winterbourne was bewildered; he stood staring. Mr. Giovanelli had finished singing; he left the piano and came over to Daisy. "Won't you come into the other room and have some tea?" he asked, bending before her with his ornamental smile.

Daisy turned to Winterbourne, beginning to smile again. He was still more perplexed, for this inconsequent smile made nothing clear, though it seemed to prove, indeed, that she had a sweetness and softness that reverted instinctively to the pardon of offences. "It has never occurred to Mr. Winterbourne to offer me any tea," she said, with her little tormenting manner.

"I have offered you advice," Winterbourne rejoined.

"I prefer weak tea!" cried Daisy, and she went off with the brilliant Giovanelli. She sat with him in the adjoining room, in the embrasure of the window, for the rest of the evening. There was an interesting performance at the piano, but neither of these young people

gave heed to it. When Daisy came to take leave of Mrs. Walker, this lady conscientiously repaired the weakness of which she had been guilty at the moment of the young girl's arrival. She turned her back straight upon Miss Miller and left her to depart with what grace she might. Winterbourne was standing near the door; he saw it all. Daisy turned very pale and looked at her mother, but Mrs. Miller was humbly unconscious of any violation of the usual social forms. She appeared, indeed, to have felt an incongruous impulse to draw attention to her own striking observance of them. "Good-night, Mrs. Walker," she said; "we've had a beautiful evening. You see if I let Daisy come to parties without me, I don't want her to go away without me." Daisy turned away, looking with a pale, grave face at the circle near the door; Winterbourne saw that, for the first moment, she was too much shocked and puzzled even for indignation. He on his side was greatly touched.

"That was very cruel," he said to Mrs. Walker.

"She never enters my drawing-room again," replied his hostess.

Since Winterbourne was not to meet her in Mrs. Walker's drawing-room, he went as often as possible to Mrs. Miller's hotel. The ladies were rarely at home, but when he found them the devoted Giovanelli was always present. Very often the brilliant little Roman was in the drawing-room with Daisy alone, Mrs. Miller being apparently constantly of the opinion that discretion is the better part of surveillance. Winterbourne noted, at first with surprise, that Daisy on these occasions was never embarrassed or annoyed by his own entrance; but he very presently began to feel that she had no more surprises for him; the unexpected in her behaviour was the only thing to expect. She showed no displeasure at her *tête-à-tête* with Giovanelli being interrupted; she could chatter as freshly and freely with two gentlemen as with one; there was always, in her conversation, the same odd mixture of audacity and puerility. Winterbourne remarked to himself that if she was seriously interested in Giovanelli it was very singular that she should not take more trouble to preserve the sanctity of their interviews, and he liked her the more for her innocent-looking indifference and her apparently inexhaustible good humour. He could hardly have said why, but she seemed to him a girl who would never be jealous. At the risk of exciting a somewhat derisive smile on the reader's part, I may affirm that with regard to the women who had hitherto interested him, it very often seemed to Winterbourne among the possibilities that, given certain contingencies, he should be afraid—literally afraid—of these ladies; he had a pleasant sense that he should never be afraid of Daisy Miller. It must be added that this sentiment was not altogether flattering to Daisy; it was part of his conviction, or rather of his apprehension, that she would prove a very light young person.

But she was evidently very much interested in Giovanelli. She looked at him whenever he spoke; she was perpetually telling him to do this and to do that; she was constantly "chaffing" and abusing him.

She appeared completely to have forgotten that Winterbourne had said anything to displease her at Mrs. Walker's little party. One Sunday afternoon, having gone to St. Peter's with his aunt, Winterbourne perceived Daisy strolling about the great church in company with the inevitable Giovanelli. Presently he pointed out the young girl and her cavalier to Mrs. Costello. This lady looked at them a moment through her eyeglass, and then she said:

"That's what makes you so pensive in these days, eh?"

"I had not the least idea I was pensive," said the young man.

"You are very much pre-occupied, you are thinking of something."

"And what is it," he asked, "that you accuse me of thinking of?"

"Of that young lady's—Miss Baker's, Miss Chandler's—what's her name? Miss Miller's intrigue with that little barber's block."

"Do you call it an intrigue," Winterbourne asked—"an affair that goes on with such peculiar publicity?"

"That's their folly," said Mrs. Costello, "it's not their merit."

"No," rejoined Winterbourne, with something of that pensiveness to which his aunt had alluded. "I don't believe that there is anything to be called an intrigue."

"I have heard a dozen people speak of it; they say she is quite carried away by him."

"They are certainly very intimate," said Winterbourne.

Mrs. Costello inspected the young couple again with her optical instrument. "He is very handsome. One easily sees how it is. She thinks him the most elegant man in the world, the finest gentleman. She has never seen anything like him; he is better even than the courier. It was the courier probably who introduced him, and if he succeeds in marrying the young lady, the courier will come in for a magnificent commission."

"I don't believe she thinks of marrying him," said Winterbourne, "and I don't believe he hopes to marry her."

"You may be very sure she thinks of nothing. She goes on from day to day, from hour to hour, as they did in the Golden Age. I can imagine nothing more vulgar. And at the same time," added Mrs. Costello, "depend upon it that she may tell you any moment that she is 'engaged.'"

"I think that is more than Giovanelli expects," said Winterbourne.

"Who is Giovanelli?"

"The little Italian. I have asked questions about him and learned something. He is apparently a perfectly respectable little man. I believe he is in a small way, a *cavaliere avvocato*. But he doesn't move in what are called the first circles. I think it is really not absolutely impossible that the courier introduced him. He is evidently immensely charmed with Miss Miller. If she thinks him the finest gentleman in the world, he, on his side, has never found himself in personal contact with such splendour, such opulence, such expensiveness, as this young

lady's. And then she must seem to him wonderfully pretty and interesting. I rather doubt that he dreams of marrying her. That must appear to him too impossible a piece of luck. He has nothing but his handsome face to offer, and there is a substantial Mr. Miller in that mysterious land of dollars. Giovanelli knows that he hasn't a title to offer. If he were only a count or a *marchese!* He must wonder at his luck at the way they have taken him up."

"He accounts for it by his handsome face, and thinks Miss Miller a young lady *qui se passe ses fantaisies!*" said Mrs. Costello.

"It is very true," Winterbourne pursued, "that Daisy and her mamma have not yet risen to that stage of—what shall I call it?—of culture, at which the idea of catching a count or a *marchese* begins. I believe that they are intellectually incapable of that conception."

"Ah! but the *avvocato* can't believe it," said Mrs. Costello.

Of the observation excited by Daisy's "intrigue," Winterbourne gathered that day at St. Peter's sufficient evidence. A dozen of the American colonists in Rome came to talk with Mrs. Costello, who sat on a little portable stool at the base of one of the great pilasters. The vesper service was going forward in splendid chants and organ-tones in the adjacent choir, and meanwhile, between Mrs. Costello and her friends, there was a great deal said about poor little Miss Miller's going really "too far." Winterbourne was not pleased with what he heard; but when, coming out upon the great steps of the church, he saw Daisy, who had emerged before him, get into an open cab with her accomplice and roll away through the cynical streets of Rome, he could not deny to himself that she was going very far indeed. He felt very sorry for her—not exactly that he believed that she had completely lost her head, but because it was painful to hear so much that was pretty, and undefended, and natural, assigned to a vulgar place among the categories of disorder. He made an attempt after this to give a hint to Mrs. Miller. He met one day in the Corso a friend—a tourist like himself—who had just come out of the Doria Palace, where he had been walking through the beautiful gallery. His friend talked for a moment about the superb portrait of Innocent X. by Velasquez, which hangs in one of the cabinets of the palace, and then said, "And in the same cabinet, by-the-way, I had the pleasure of contemplating a picture of a different kind—that pretty American girl whom you pointed out to me last week." In answer to Winterbourne's inquiries, his friend narrated that the pretty American girl—prettier than ever—was seated with a companion in the secluded nook in which the great papal portrait was enshrined.

"Who was her companion?" asked Winterbourne.

"A little Italian with a bouquet in his button hole. The girl is delightfully pretty, but I thought I understood from you the other day that she was a young lady *du meilleur monde.*"

"So she is!" answered Winterbourne; and having assured himself that his informant had seen Daisy and her companion but five minutes

before, he jumped into a cab and went to call on Mrs. Miller. She was at home; but she apologised to him for receiving him in Daisy's absence.

"She's gone out somewhere with Mr. Giovanelli," said Mrs. Miller. "She's always going round with Mr. Giovanelli."

"I have noticed that they are very intimate," Winterbourne observed.

"Oh! it seems as if they couldn't live without each other!" said Mrs. Miller. "Well, he's a real gentleman anyhow. I keep telling Daisy she's engaged!"

"And what does Daisy say?"

"Oh, she says she isn't engaged. But she might as well be!" this impartial parent resumed. "She goes on as if she was. But I've made Mr. Giovanelli promise to tell me, if *she* doesn't. I should want to write to Mr. Miller about it—shouldn't you?"

Winterbourne replied that he certainly should; and the state of mind of Daisy's mamma struck him as so unprecedented in the annals of parental vigilance that he gave up as utterly irrelevant the attempt to place her upon her guard.

After this Daisy was never at home, and Winterbourne ceased to meet her at the houses of their common acquaintance, because, as he perceived, these shrewd people had quite made up their minds that she was going too far. They ceased to invite her, and they intimated that they desired to express to observant Europeans the great truth that, though Miss Daisy Miller was a young American lady, her behaviour was not representative—was regarded by her compatriots as abnormal. Winterbourne wondered how she felt about all the cold shoulders that were turned towards her, and sometimes it annoyed him to suspect that she did not feel at all. He said to himself that she was too light and childish, too uncultivated and unreasoning, too provincial, to have reflected upon her ostracism or even to have perceived it. Then at other moments he believed that she carried about in her elegant and irresponsible little organism a defiant, passionate, perfectly observant consciousness of the impression she produced. He asked himself whether Daisy's defiance came from the consciousness of innocence or from her being, essentially a young person of the reckless class. It must be admitted that holding oneself to a belief in Daisy's "innocence" came to seem to Winterbourne more and more a matter of fine-spun gallantry. As I have already had occasion to relate, he was angry at finding himself reduced to chopping logic about this young lady; he was vexed at his want of instinctive certitude as to how far her eccentricities were generic, national, and how far they were personal. From either view of them he had somehow missed her, and now it was too late. She was "carried away" by Mr. Giovanelli.

A few days after his brief interview with her mother, he encountered her in that beautiful abode of flowering desolation known as the Palace of the Cæsars. The early Roman spring had filled the air with bloom

and perfume, and the rugged surface of the Palatine was muffled with tender verdure. Daisy was strolling along the top of one of those great mounds of ruin that are embanked with mossy marble and paved with monumental inscriptions. It seemed to him that Rome had never been so lovely as just then. He stood looking off at the enchanting harmony of line and colour that remotely encircles the city, inhaling the softly humid odours and feeling the freshness of the year and the antiquity of the place reaffirm themselves in mysterious interfusion. It seemed to him also that Daisy had never looked so pretty; but this had been an observation of his whenever he met her. Giovanelli was at her side, and Giovanelli, too, wore an aspect of even unwonted brilliancy.

"Well," said Daisy, "I should think you would be lonesome!"

"Lonesome?" asked Winterbourne.

"You are always going round by yourself. Can't you get anyone to walk with you?"

"I am not so fortunate," said Winterbourne, "as your companion."

Giovanelli, from the first, had treated Winterbourne with distinguished politeness; he listened with a deferential air to his remarks; he laughed, punctiliously, at his pleasantries; he seemed disposed to testify to his belief that Winterbourne was a superior young man. He carried himself in no degree like a jealous wooer; he had obviously a great deal of tact; he had no objection to your expecting a little humility of him. It even seemed to Winterbourne at times that Giovanelli would find a certain mental relief in being able to have a private understanding with him—to say to him, as an intelligent man, that, bless you, *he* knew how extraordinary was this young lady, and didn't flatter himself with delusive—or at least *too* delusive—hopes of matrimony and dollars. On this occasion he strolled away from his companion to pluck a sprig of almond-blossom, which he carefully arranged in his button-hole.

"I know why you say that," said Daisy, watching Giovanelli. "Because you think I go round too much with *him!*" And she nodded at her attendant.

"Every one thinks so—if you care to know," said Winterbourne.

"Of course I care to know!" Daisy exclaimed seriously. "But I don't believe it. They are only pretending to be shocked. They don't really care a straw what I do. Besides, I don't go round so much."

"I think you will find they do care. They will show it—disagreeably."

Daisy looked at him a moment. "How—disagreeably?"

"Haven't you noticed anything?" Winterbourne asked.

"I have noticed you. But I noticed you were as stiff as an umbrella the first time I saw you."

"You will find I am not so stiff as several others," said Winterbourne, smiling.

"How shall I find it?"

"By going to see the others."

"What will they do to me?"

"They will give you the cold shoulder. Do you know what that means?"

Daisy was looking at him intently; she began to colour. "Do you mean as Mrs. Walker did the other night?"

"Exactly!" said Winterbourne.

She looked away at Giovanelli, who was decorating himself with his almond-blossom. Then looking back at Winterbourne—"I shouldn't think you would let people be so unkind!" she said.

"How can I help it?" he asked.

"I should think you would say something."

"I do say something;" and he paused a moment. "I say that your mother tells me that she believes you are engaged."

"Well, she does," said Daisy very simply.

Winterbourne began to laugh. "And does Randolph believe it?" he asked.

"I guess Randolph doesn't believe anything," said Daisy. Randolph's scepticism excited Winterbourne to further hilarity, and he observed that Giovanelli was coming back to them. Daisy, observing it too, addressed herself again to her countryman. "Since you have mentioned it," she said, "I *am* engaged." . . . Winterbourne looked at her; he had stopped laughing. "You don't believe it!" she added.

He was silent a moment; and then, "Yes, I believe it!" he said.

"Oh, no, you don't," she answered. "Well, then—I am not!"

The young girl and her cicerone were on their way to the gate of the enclosure, so that Winterbourne, who had but lately entered, presently took leave of them. A week afterwards he went to dine at a beautiful villa on the Cælian Hill, and, on arriving, dismissed his hired vehicle. The evening was charming, and he promised himself the satisfaction of walking home beneath the Arch of Constantine and past the vaguely-lighted monuments of the Forum. There was a waning moon in the sky, and her radiance was not brilliant, but she was veiled in a thin cloud-curtain which seemed to diffuse and equalise it. When, on his return from the villa (it was eleven o'clock), Winterbourne approached the dusky circle of the Colosseum, it recurred to him, as a lover of the picturesque, that the interior, in the pale moonshine, would be well worth a glance. He turned aside and walked to one of the empty arches, near which, as he observed, an open carriage—one of the little Roman street-cabs—was stationed. Then he passed in, among the cavernous shadows of the great structure, and emerged upon the clear and silent arena. The place had never seemed to him more impressive. One-half of the gigantic circus was in deep shade; the other was sleeping in the luminous dusk. As he stood there he began to murmur Byron's famous lines, out of "Manfred;" but before he had finished his quotation he remembered that if nocturnal meditations in the Colosseum are recommended by the poets, they are deprecated by the doctors. The

historic atmosphere was there, certainly; but the historic atmosphere, scientifically considered, was no better than a villanous miasma. Winterbourne walked to the middle of the arena, to take a more general glance, intending thereafter to make a hasty retreat. The great cross in the centre was covered with shadow; it was only as he drew near it that he made it out distinctly. Then he saw that two persons were stationed upon the low steps which formed its base. One of these was a woman, seated; her companion was standing in front of her.

Presently the sound of the woman's voice came to him distinctly in the warm night-air. "Well, he looks at us as one of the old lions or tigers may have looked at the Christian martyrs!" These were the words he heard, in the familiar accent of Miss Daisy Miller.

"Let us hope he is not very hungry," responded the ingenious Giovanelli. "He will have to take me first; you will serve for dessert!"

Winterbourne stopped, with a sort of horror; and, it must be added, with a sort of relief. It was as if a sudden illumination had been flashed upon the ambiguity of Daisy's behaviour and the riddle had become easy to read. She was a young lady whom a gentleman need no longer be at pains to respect. He stood there looking at her—looking at her companion, and not reflecting that though he saw them vaguely, he himself must have been more brightly visible. He felt angry with himself that he had bothered so much about the right way of regarding Miss Daisy Miller. Then, as he was going to advance again, he checked himself; not from the fear that he was doing her injustice, but from a sense of the danger of appearing unbecomingly exhilarated by this sudden revulsion from cautious criticism. He turned away towards the entrance of the place; but as he did so he heard Daisy speak again.

"Why, it was Mr. Winterbourne! He saw me—and he cuts me!"

What a clever little reprobate she was, and how smartly she played at injured innocence! But he wouldn't cut her. Winterbourne came forward again, and went towards the great cross. Daisy had got up; Giovanelli lifted his hat. Winterbourne had now begun to think simply of the craziness, from a sanitary point of view, of a delicate young girl lounging away the evening in this nest of malaria. What if she *were* a clever little reprobate? that was no reason for her dying of the *perniciosa*. "How long have you been here?" he asked, almost brutally.

Daisy, lovely in the flattering moonlight, looked at him a moment. Then—"All the evening," she answered gently. . . . "I never saw anything so pretty."

"I am afraid," said Winterbourne, "that you will not think Roman fever very pretty. This is the way people catch it. I wonder," he added, turning to Giovanelli, "that you, a native Roman, should countenance such a terrible indiscretion."

"Ah," said the handsome native, "for myself, I am not afraid."

"Neither am I—for you! I am speaking for this young lady."

Giovanelli lifted his well-shaped eyebrows and showed his brilliant teeth. But he took Winterbourne's rebuke with docility. "I told the Signorina it was a grave indiscretion; but when was the Signorina ever prudent?"

"I never was sick, and I don't mean to be!" the Signorina declared. "I don't look like much, but I'm healthy! I was bound to see the Colosseum by moonlight; I shouldn't have wanted to go home without that; and we have had the most beautiful time, haven't we, Mr. Giovanelli? If there has been any danger, Eugenio can give me some pills. He has got some splendid pills."

"I should advise you," said Winterbourne, "to drive home as fast as possible and take one!"

"What you say is very wise," Giovanelli rejoined. "I will go and make sure the carriage is at hand." And he went forward rapidly.

Daisy followed with Winterbourne. He kept looking at her; she seemed not in the least embarrassed. Winterbourne said nothing; Daisy chattered about the beauty of the place. "Well, I *have* seen the Colosseum by moonlight!" she exclaimed. "That's one good thing." Then, noticing Winterbourne's silence, she asked him why he didn't speak. He made no answer; he only began to laugh. They passed under one of the dark archways; Giovanelli was in front with the carriage. Here Daisy stopped a moment, looking at the young American. "*Did* you believe I was engaged the other day?" she asked.

"It doesn't matter what I believed the other day," said Winterbourne, still laughing.

"Well, what do you believe now?"

"I believe that it makes very little difference whether you are engaged or not!"

He felt the young girl's pretty eyes fixed upon him through the thick gloom of the archway; she was apparently going to answer. But Giovanelli hurried her forward. "Quick, quick," he said; "if we get in by midnight we are quite safe."

Daisy took her seat in the carriage, and the fortunate Italian placed himself beside her. "Don't forget Eugenio's pills!" said Winterbourne, as he lifted his hat.

"I don't care," said Daisy, in a little strange tone, "whether I have Roman fever or not!" Upon this the cab-driver cracked his whip, and they rolled away over the desultory patches of the antique pavement.

Winterbourne—to do him justice, as it were—mentioned to no one that he had encountered Miss Miller, at midnight, in the Colosseum with a gentleman; but nevertheless, a couple of days later, the fact of her having been there under these circumstances was known to every member of the little American circle, and commented accordingly. Winterbourne reflected that they had of course known it at the hotel, and that, after Daisy's return, there had been an exchange of remarks

between the porter and the cab-driver. But the young man was conscious at the same moment that it had ceased to be a matter of serious regret to him that the little American flirt should be "talked about" by low-minded menials. These people, a day or two later, had serious information to give: the little American flirt was alarmingly ill. Winterbourne, when the rumour came to him, immediately went to the hotel for more news. He found that two or three charitable friends had preceded him, and that they were being entertained in Mrs. Miller's salon by Randolph.

"It's going round at night," said Randolph—"that's what made her sick. She's always going round at night. I shouldn't think she'd want to—it's so plaguey dark. You can't see anything here at night, except when there's a moon. In America there's always a moon!" Mrs. Miller was invisible; she was now, at least, giving her daughter the advantage of her society. It was evident that Daisy was dangerously ill.

Winterbourne went often to ask for news of her, and once he saw Mrs. Miller, who, though deeply alarmed, was—rather to his surprise—perfectly composed, and, as it appeared, a most efficient and judicious nurse. She talked a good deal about Dr. Davis, but Winterbourne paid her the compliment of saying to himself that she was not, after all, such a monstrous goose. "Daisy spoke of you the other day," she said to him. "Half the time she doesn't know what she's saying, but that time I think she did. She gave me a message; she told me to tell you. She told me to tell you that she never was engaged to that handsome Italian. I am sure I am very glad; Mr. Giovanelli hasn't been near us since she was taken ill. I thought he was so much of a gentleman; but I don't call that very polite! A lady told me that he was afraid I was angry with him for taking Daisy round at night. Well, so I am; but I suppose he knows I'm a lady. I would scorn to scold him. Any way, she says she's not engaged. I don't know why she wanted you to know; but she said to me three times—'Mind you tell Mr. Winterbourne.' And then she told me to ask if you remembered the time you went to that castle, in Switzerland. But I said I wouldn't give any such messages as that. Only, if she is not engaged, I'm sure I'm glad to know it."

But, as Winterbourne had said, it mattered very little. A week after this the poor girl died; it had been a terrible case of the fever. Daisy's grave was in the little Protestant cemetery, in an angle of the wall of imperial Rome, beneath the cypresses and the thick spring-flowers. Winterbourne stood there beside it, with a number of other mourners; a number larger than the scandal excited by the young lady's career would have led you to expect. Near him stood Giovanelli, who came nearer still before Winterbourne turned away. Giovanelli was very pale; on this occasion he had no flower in his button-hole; he seemed to wish to say something. At last he said, "She was the most

beautiful young lady I ever saw, and the most amiable." And then he added in a moment, "And she was the most innocent."

Winterbourne looked at him, and presently repeated his words, "And the most innocent?"

"The most innocent!"

Winterbourne felt sore and angry. "Why the devil," he asked, "did you take her to that fatal place?"

Mr. Giovanelli's urbanity was apparently imperturbable. He looked on the ground a moment, and then he said, "For myself, I had no fear; and she wanted to go."

"That was no reason!" Winterbourne declared.

The subtle Roman again dropped his eyes. "If she had lived, I should have got nothing. She would never have married me, I am sure."

"She would never have married you?"

"For a moment I hoped so. But no. I am sure."

Winterbourne listened to him; he stood staring at the raw protuberance among the April daisies. When he turned away again Mr. Giovanelli, with his light slow step, had retired.

Winterbourne almost immediately left Rome; but the following summer he again met his aunt, Mrs. Costello, at Vevey. Mrs. Costello was fond of Vevey. In the interval Winterbourne had often thought of Daisy Miller and her mystifying manners. One day he spoke of her to his aunt—said it was on his conscience that he had done her injustice.

"I am sure I don't know," said Mrs. Costello. "How did your injustice affect her?"

"She sent me a message before her death which I didn't understand at the time. But I have understood it since. She would have appreciated one's esteem."

"Is that a modest way," asked Mrs. Costello, "of saying that she would have reciprocated one's affection?"

Winterbourne offered no answer to this question; but he presently said, "You were right in that remark that you made last summer. I was booked to make a mistake. I have lived too long in foreign parts."

Nevertheless, he went back to live at Geneva, whence there continue to come the most contradictory accounts of his motives of sojourn: a report that he is "studying" hard—an intimation that he is much interested in a very clever foreign lady.

HENRY JAMES, Jun.

Stray Thoughts on Scenery.

I am never in a humbler, or, therefore, let us hope, in a healthier frame of mind, than when standing before a great landscape—a Claude, a Turner, or a David Cox. In a purely vulgar and Philistine sense, I rather "like pictures." My taste, it is true, is grovelling. I am afraid that I enjoy Hogarth a good deal more than Botticelli; and that I am apt to be extremely puzzled by the more subtle and mystical forms of art, evanescent graces and recondite harmonies. I like to have a plain, intelligible, downright mortal in familiar forms, as tangible as a proposition in Adam Smith. I would, therefore, no more attempt to criticise pictures than a deaf man should talk about music. Still I sometimes examine my own feelings as a man of science may derive true knowledge even from the humblest objects; and I have occasionally asked myself why should I suffer from this special insensibility to landscape? I flatter myself that I love a stretch of blue sea or misty hillside as well as my neighbours, and yet when I see them on the canvas of the greatest artists, I remain obstinately unmoved. I can see that the portrait is like the original; but it does not rouse within me the faintest shadow of the pleasure which the original gives.

In truth, the explanation is not far to seek. An artist can so incarnate his emotions in a picture of human interest that they become intelligible even to the stupid. It is not easy so to project them into a lifeless object as to pierce the thick hide of inartistic natures. A picture of the Virgin and Child may incline even a rough peasant to fall on his knees, because the artist's spirit of veneration is easily transmitted through a symbol which for many centuries has been associated with a special religious sentiment. The spectator knows at once how he ought to feel, and the particular work harmonises, with the appropriate emotion. And so, when a sculptor reveals a new ideal of perfect grace, or a portrait-painter gives the essence of a character, or a painter of incident shows the dramatic play of passion, there is no difficulty in understanding at least his general drift. I know the meaning of every face and figure in Hogarth's *Marriage à la Mode* as well as I know the meaning of every sentence in *Tom Jones*, and Reynolds' portrait of Johnson seems to tell me as much about the lexicographer as a chapter of Boswell. There remain indeed many curious puzzles as to the precise means by which the purpose is effected; it is not easy to understand how the hairbreadth difference in the curve of a lip, or a minute variation in the shading of an eye, should modify our views of the characters behind; but at least we can see why, in such cases, the painter

and the spectator should come into relation with each other. They talk the same language; they have a common understanding as to the interpretation of mind from outward form; the spectator may catch the contagion of awe, reverence, love of beauty, or vivid interest in human passion, because those emotions can be woven into the very tissue of the artist's canvas.

But how can this be done in the case of landscape? Nature, in fact, is above all things indifferent. It is a vast mirror which reflects every possible mood; and, not only so, but a mirror, every part of which may reflect every mood. It assimilates itself with strange facility with all our feelings. It looks on with superlative calmness at every incident of human life, at our joys and sorrows, at festivals or carnage, the tumultuous excitement of crowds, and the lonely sufferings of hermits. The strange impassibility has an ambiguous effect. Sometimes we fix a private interpretation upon the writing of nature. The observer is moved by a sense of outward sympathy because the scenery brings back the memory of former sentiment. That is a frequent moral with Wordsworth, as in the exquisite lines—

> My eyes are dim with childish tears,
> My heart is idly stirred;
> For the same sound is in my ears,
> Which in those days I heard.

And so, in the companion poem, old Matthew is moved by the recollection of his lost child by the sight of a cloud—

> Yon cloud with that long purple cleft
> Brings fresh into my mind
> A day like this, which I have left
> Full thirty years behind.

It is the strange mixture of change and eternity; the everlasting flux of all things, everlastingly bringing back the same forms. The cloud does not remain fixed for one instant; it is the very symbol of change; and yet the old cloud seems to revive when the life, which had seemed so full and incapable of extinction, has vanished like the most evanescent wreath of mist. What perishes lives; and what lives, perishes. For Wordsworth, this is comforting, because it seems like a pledge for the eternity of the old tender emotion. It can be recalled to life when apparently lost for ever. To Byron things show their reverse side. Nature is impassible and therefore misanthropic. The Waterloo corn springing up in the autumn suggests that carnage has no meaning for nature, except as providing a certain quantity of manure. The anguish of thousands of human beings makes no more difference to it than the destruction of millions of insects. A similar reflection is expressed with far more poetic force (for Byron's misanthropy is a little faded), by Mr. Carlyle. Speaking of the horrors of a scene in the French Revolution, he exclaims:—"O evening sun of July, how, at this hour, thy beams fall slant on reapers amid peaceful woody fields; on old women spinning in

cottages; on ships far out in the silent main; on balls at the Orangerie at Versailles, where high-rouged dames of the palace are even now dancing with double-jacketed Hussar officers—and also on this roaring hell-porch of a Hôtel de Ville." What, indeed, can the sun care for the perishing of the petty bipeds crawling on its infinitesimal satellite?

However expressed, the sentiment is too obvious not to have been embodied in the verses of every poetic writer who has an eye for Nature. Nature, it would seem, has no meaning, or has every meaning. Since it turns the same face upon all our petty joys and sufferings, it is cruel and unsympathetic. It is alike under all our varying moods, and, therefore, says the more happily constituted man, it is always ready with a soothing anodyne for overstrained nerves. The permanent in nature, the heavens, the sun, the mountains which watch generation after generation with changeless eyes, are easily associated with the most prevailing mood, whatever it may be; and therefore turn one side to the optimist and the reverse to the pessimist. And still more we may associate our own private sentiments, varying indefinitely and capriciously, with any special phase of external nature. The deeper meaning, if it has one, is blurred or quite obliterated by some petty sentiment of our own. Emily Brontë seems to have loved the Yorkshire moors because to her they represented liberty and escape from uncongenial surroundings of her daily life. Smike, we may fancy, if he had grown up to manhood, would have loathed Yorkshire as the predestined site of Dotheboys Hall. Whole districts become flavoured by an amalgam of associations formed in the regions of the mind which lie below the current of our conscious life. I can partly account for my unpleasant impression of one of the noblest pieces of scenery in the world because it has got mixed up in memory with a cross-fire of tobacco-juice squirted from human mouths to the immediate neighbourhood of my boots. I am unable to say distinctly why the Strand should have a touch of romance for me and Oxford Street be the incarnation of dreary commonplace, because the feeling was formed in days before conscious reflection had begun. Of all views that I have seen on land and ocean none is more impressive than a London sunset as I have seen it from Hyde Park, when a huge mass of lurid cloud is piled into more than Alpine magnificence over the west, when the murmurous city is shrouded eastwards by its sullen drapery of fog, and the Serpentine, ruffled by a steady breeze, looks wilder and more mysterious than a Highland loch. I have wondered why any one should seek elsewhere for the most impressive aspects of nature. But then I am conscious that my feeling is chiefly woven out of a hundred threads of half-conscious association which it is impossible to trace or unravel. When scenery is so much at the mercy of each man's fancy, it seems that it can have no single meaning for all. One man loves the sea and hates the mountains, and another reverses the taste. It is not that the sea or the mountains are intrinsically superior; but that one man is giddy in high places and another squeamish on rough water.

The language of nature, then, shall we say with association philosophers? is written in arbitrary characters to which each man can affix his own interpretation. Any vein of sentiment can be accidentally attached to any natural object. No inanimate object is beautiful or ugly in itself. Taste changes like the fashions. We love or affect to love wild scenery now as much as our ancestors hated it. The change is just as arbitrary as the abandonment of wigs, or the substitution of the chimney-pot for the cocked hat. All such tastes are matters of pure accident; the man who prides himself on feeling differently from others is a fool; and the man who affects to give reasons for his tastes is a charlatan.

This teaching undoubtedly shocks our feelings. We believe most resolutely that there is such a thing as intrinsic beauty in scenery. We do well to be angry with a man who is dead to the glories of the Alps; who, like the old baronet, prefers the smell of a flambeau at a playhouse to the breath of a May morning in the country, and considers Charing Cross to be a nobler prospect than the Highlands. It is irritating to be contradicted on matters of taste. Even Shakspeare, the most tolerant of men, could not be content to pity the unfortunate being who had no music in his soul (probably because the poor man's hearing was defective), but proceeded to declare that such a one was fit for treason and all manner of wickedness. People are more vehement in such matters than in disputes about theology or politics, because reasoning is out of the question, and they are forced to supply its place by dogmatism. I admit that I should have a difficulty in allowing that any one is fairly to be called my fellow-creature who should speak disrespectfully of Mr. Blanc. Still I do not see how we can escape from the conclusion that we ought to avoid bigotry even here, and deal tenderly with those who may have been misled by prejudices imbibed in infancy, or who happen to be moved by aspects of nature to which we are comparatively dead. They may be annoying, but they are not necessarily wicked people. We may cherish our own private prejudices, but we find it provokingly hard to justify them. Why is a man wrong who dislikes what we admire, and sees in a landscape just what the artist did not mean to express?

It would be agreeable to justify at least some little flavour of bigotry; if not to suppress all tastes but one, yet to show that there are certain limits which cannot be rightfully transgressed except under cover of some absolute physical defect. Half the pleasure of conversation upon any subject is destroyed when one is not allowed to regard a difference of opinion as indicative of some degree of stupidity, and more or less suggestive of moral obliquity. And, in fact, I think that it is possible to show that even in taste as to scenery there is a certain right and wrong in spite of the inevitable latitude of private judgment.

The obvious difficulty is the want of any assignable standard. When we are speaking of works of art, we see at once that there is a definite meaning in ideal beauty. A fine Greek statue, for example,

may be regarded as the solution of a definite problem. Given human flesh and bones, how are they to be so arranged as to produce the maximum of strength and agility? A figure is perfectly graceful when it is so formed that it can walk, or run, or fight, or perform any athletic exercise better than any of its fellows. A movement is graceful when some given end is accomplished with the utmost ease and precision. The excess or defect of power is equally painful to witness; and perfection is reached when the man, regarded as a machine, is so contrived as to apply just the right amount of power in the right place, when a given exertion produces the greatest effect, or a given effect is produced with the greatest ease. The ideal form includes, in short, the perception of perfect adaptation of means to an end. The end being given, we judge instinctively of the completeness of the attainment.

When, however, we speak of scenery it is impossible to suggest any such standard. As soon as we regard Nature as a contrivance for securing our comforts, we pass from the æsthetic to the purely utilitarian point of view. Consider the moon simply as a lighting apparatus, and the stars as intended to fix the longitude and latitude, and they lose all their special charm of the infinite and mysterious. Natural objects are not really adapted to us, but we to them. They are symbols of the great external forces to which we must accommodate ourselves, and which therefore may serve innumerable purposes altogether beyond our power of imagination. The intense perception of this is precisely the very essence of what we call the love of nature. It is the strange and solemn delight which affects a reverent mind when impressed by its own insignificance in this vast and mysterious universe. The architecture of nature belongs to the romantic instead of the classical school. Instead of rounded symmetry and completeness, its glory is in the suggestion of innumerable meanings too vast to be adequately grasped, and too shadowy to be distinctly realised.

There is, it is true, a kind of equivocal sentiment which is sometimes confounded with love of nature. The agriculturist and the gardener take a very proper and healthy pleasure in looking at rich fields and gorgeous flower-beds. They measure the beauty of a landscape by the degree in which it has been thoroughly tamed and adapted to human wants. But between this view and that of the artist there is not so much a contrast as a complete divergence. One may love both a statue and a mountain; but the two sentiments appeal to different parts of our character. Now we ought properly to consider a field or a garden simply as a work of art. The raw material is less altered than in some other products; a garden differs less from a waste than a watch from the bare lumps of metal from which it is formed; but in each case the excellence is proportioned to the completeness with which a definite end has been accomplished. It is a mistake to attempt to blend the two sentiments. Gardens which try to look like nature are generally very bad nature and very bad art. Sham waterfalls are as silly as sham rivers, and even

more absurd; the artificial rocks which it was proposed to place upon the Thirlmere embankments would be the very acme of bad taste; no man can put himself in competition with the Supreme Architect of nature without appearing to be almost profane. What is artificial should be frankly artificial. For my part, I like a garden inclosed by rectangular walls, with straight gravel walks on a geometrical plan, with trees —not exactly clipped into the conventional peacock—but arranged so as to form distinctly artificial masses. Indeed, the most beautiful of gardens are generally good old kitchen-gardens, which not only admit that they are disposed for an end, but admit that it is a utilitarian end. There is no nonsense about them; and beauty comes without being sought. Fine old apple-trees, lichen-covered, and with boughs bent by the weight of fruit, a thick undergrowth of stubborn currant and gooseberry-bushes, the ground carpeted with strawberry-beds, walls covered with carefully-trained fruit-trees, showing luscious peaches and nectarines enough to satisfy the appetite of Dr. Johnson, and suggestive of standing to gnaw their sunny sides with your hands in your pockets—that is the kind of garden which is to me really beautiful. Every bit of ground has been turned to account; in every direction there is a long vista of objects delightful alike to sight, taste, and smell; the lazy humming of bees provokes to drowsy and luxuriant repose; there may be just room for an old well, with a lazy frog or two simmering in the water, a mossy dial, and a green worm-eaten seat, where you need only just stretch out your hand to enjoy the finest, because most infantile, pleasures of the palate. No lawns or pastures or elaborate intricacy of paths can rival such a garden in beauty; and if anybody should deny that it is a poetical taste, he may read Marvell's poem, and learn to appreciate the true gardener's sentiment.

But by the love of nature we generally mean the entirely different sentiment which is provoked in the highest degree by such supreme excellence as the view of the Alps from the Lombard plain, by the Falls of Niagara, or a coast beaten by the full force of the Atlantic. And in this, the very first element, the groundwork of the whole emotion is the suggestion, in one way or another, of the infinite. The object, whatever it may be, need not be of stupendous size; but, for some reason or other, it should carry us beyond ourselves, and make us think of spaces which the wearied imagination cannot follow without flagging, and of the forces which make us feel mere insignificant insects, crawling upon the rind of the monstrous earth.

It is for the want of this element that most English scenery is (I must confess) wearisome to me. An American who lands here for the first time generally admires the country because it reminds him of a garden. That is just why I dislike it. It is so pretty, small, and hide-bound—so thoroughly subdued by the labours of many generations, that one can scarcely conceive the very existence of cosmical forces. Man seems to have created the world. It is a mere passive instrument in his

hands, as well arranged as a scientific museum. Look at one of those characteristic English landscapes which throw some people into ecstasies. The little hummocks that do duty for hills limit your horizon to some half mile in radius. As if to demonstrate the futility of the struggles of nature, they are cut up by hedges into little parallelograms, which scorn even to adapt themselves to the natural form of the ground. The British country-house in its ancestral domain is surely the very symbol of dull propriety. It is redolent of utter respectability, of dressing for dinner, and talking of the game-laws, and appearing in the family-pew, and slaughtering partridges for want of rational amusement. A park is to a really noble landscape what the half-tame deer or pheasant is to the Alpine chamois or the condors of the Andes. If ever I hang myself, it will be to one of the ancestral trees, from the benevolent purpose of giving a little vague interest to relieve the dulness of the scenery. That there is a wealth of picturesque bits in such country, I willingly admit. They are admirably adapted for pretty little pictures, in which conventional rustics are making eyes at each other across a stile. But the picturesque is to me the deadliest enemy of the beautiful. It means a preference of oddity and eccentricity for its own sake; a taste for queer freaks of architecture and scenery, simply because useless; not as transcending mere utilitarian purposes, but as falling short of them; and therefore an enjoyment of decay, or the merely pretty, which is incompatible with any serious or exalted sentiment. A masculine taste despises it as decidedly as a utilitarian ignores it. A love of the rococo may be pardonable in a drawing-room, but becomes offensive in the open air.

But, as these sentiments are little likely to be popular, I will add that there are parts of English scenery which I admit to be really beautiful. English mists give soft and melancholy effects, and cover up mean details with broad shadows and tender lights, which are grievously missed in the staring sunshine of less favoured lands. And there are districts which are impressive in almost any light. I love, for example—though I fear that my taste is still eccentric—the scenery of the fens, and for a reason forcibly suggested by Mr. Tennyson. There

> From the frequent bridge,
> *Like emblems of infinity,*
> The trenched waters run from sky to sky.

The long straight lines of the "lodes," or great main drains, give at once the effect of boundless space. There are few more striking views of a kind than are to be seen on some of the reaches of the lazy Cam, where the eye wanders indolently along the straight lines of pollard willows to the dim margin, and descries far away the gray walls of Ely Cathedral, rising in hoary grandeur against the dim sky. Doubtless, the country was more impressive in old days, when the long flights of wild fowl were still to be seen cutting the air above the plashy swamps, and served to carry

the imagination away to their remote haunts in unvisited wildernesses. But even at this day the far-reaching monotony of plain and sky has a singular plaintive music of its own. Perhaps the influence is most perceptible on a winter's evening, when the rivers and dykes are frost-bound, when you are borne rapidly homewards across the ice before a steadily blowing north-easter, when all the western sky is a vast flush of roseate haze, casting faint reflections upon the pure white snow, and between you and the sunset is an oscillating string of fenmen rushing forwards at full speed, and flinging back to you the long ringing murmur of their skates. You seem to be jumping forwards into a dim visionary world of twilight, full of tender colours and melancholy sounds, and stretching away beyond all boundary of space. Or, again, no scenery can be more impressive than that of our wilder coasts. There is often a strange beauty even in the district where the tide leaves bare the vast sweeps of gleaming sand. But, of course, the noblest views are given by the granite cliffs that front the Atlantic. Stand, for example, in imagination upon that singular tower of rock which projects at the angle of the great bastion of Hartland Point. Let it be one of the lazy common-place days which are to be had in abundance at any time of year. You are at a height of some hundreds of feet above the sharp ledges, foam-fringed even in quiet weather. Three-fourths of the whole circle of the horizon is occupied by sea. From your advanced outpost you look east and south along vast ranges of cliff, where headland succeeds headland in interminable series, sinking into vagueness in the extreme distance. A few sea-birds are hovering and screaming in mid air, and perhaps a passing raven just croaks out an appropriate sentiment as he floats past. Far away, the sail of a solitary fishing-boat suggests the dangers of the inhospitable coast. And, then, looking out seawards, you see vast shining levels gradually melting into broad shadows, and the shadows succeeded by more distant breadths of light, until at last the eye is carried to the remote band of haze, of which you cannot say whether it is sky or ocean. Inevitably you fall into the mood of the old discoverers, who, when the world was not yet mapped and measured, must have had strange dreams on such promontories of mysterious lands placed far away beyond the sunset. The "Land's End" is one of the few popular names that has some touch of the poetic. It marks the spot, not by the name of some petty tribe or by some common-place feature of the immediate landscape, but by reference to the vastest of terrestrial phenomena. It has an imperial or cosmopolitan sound, and recalls epochs in the world's history and landmarks in the conformation of the planet. If we no longer dream of Eldorado or the land of Prester John, the perpetual booming of the surf may suggest more widely ranging thought. As we see the huge wave, which has come to the assault some thousands of miles, gather itself together, gleam out as if lighted from within with the brilliant blue of the pure ocean, and then bound up the rocky escarpment to fall back upon its successor, we are conscious witnesses

of the eternal strife lasting from the dim geological ages which shaped continents and determines the course of our petty history.

One other English district has peculiar charms for me, and illustrates the way in which sublimity of effect can be obtained by very humble means. White, of Selborne, if I remember rightly, speaks of the "stupendous mountain range" of the South Downs. The Downs, however, scarcely make their appearance even in those ingenious diagrams which geographers place in the frontispiece of an atlas to contrast the relative heights of Mount Everest and Skiddaw or St. Paul's. And yet there are few regions—scarcely even amongst those Alpine ramparts, which overlook hundreds of leagues of plain and hill—which give a more distinct impression of sublimity. It is owing, in part, to the inimitable delicacy of the long sweeping curves of the chalk formation. Loftier mountains have generally a serrated outline, and the chaotic ups and downs of commonplace English scenery are too uncertain to suggest any continuous design. But the huge backs of the chalk downs are defined by parabolic curves, as delicately drawn as the rounded muscles in a shapely limb. The successive ranges blend harmoniously with each other, with just enough contrast to bring out the continuity, so that the sight conveys a kind of physical pleasure in dwelling upon them, as the touch is gratified when one's hand passes over a gently modulated surface. There is no abruptness, no sudden break to arrest the eye, till one comes to the chalk cliff, where the momentary discord is resolved by the harmonious background of sea blue. Then, again, the broad open fields do not break the country up into the likeness of a chess-board; and the villages nestling in the little hollows, with their square church towers and woods shorn level by the sea breeze, do not interrupt the swinging curves of the hills, but, by their habit (as a botanist would say), strengthen the general sense as of a land welcoming with its whole heart the first incursion of the fresh ocean breezes. The faint gray-green of the springing turf, relieved at times by dashes of golden gorse, give a colour in harmony with the delicacy of form. No forms could be better devised to give the sense of vast continuous space. Even a pretty undulation may thus suggest infinity more forcibly than a mountain; just as a few gentle strokes at regular intervals set a chord vibrating, when much heavier blows, struck at random, produce only a momentary shock. The magnificent skies of the region, the broad masses of cloud that sweep in from the sea or pile themselves in vast masses upon the horizon, give actual movement and life to the scenery. The downs, one must suppose, are themselves motionless; but, under the blaze of the broad lights and shadows, they blend, separate, advance and retreat, rise and fall as restlessly as the sea waves, with which they have so close a sympathy. The downs, indeed, have a kind of terrestrial ocean on earth; the land informed by the ocean spirit, seems to give a more forcible utterance to its voices. The stupendous monotony of the sea makes it undeniably dull, because the pretty fraction visible at any moment suggests little

beyond itself; whilst the downs have the special merit attributed by critics to Turner, of being able to suggest enormous distances and atmospheric depths within a few square inches of the canvas.

This may introduce a further canon. Scenery is fine in virtue of its remote suggestions. In these, as in all cases, the power of fine scenery is proportioned to its capacity for suggesting something beyond itself. It is (to speak mathematically) like a term in an infinite series, which therefore implies an indefinite vista of similar phenomena stretching unto the remotest depths of space. In a recent book, very charming, in spite of its crabbed title, *Physiography*, an eminent teacher invites us to place ourselves in imagination upon London Bridge, and shows how the sight of the moving river suggests questions beyond question, which alternately take us back to the furthest limits of scientific knowledge. The imagination proceeds in the same fashion. The smallest brooklet has a peculiar charm, which we feel without caring to analyse. It is the universal and inevitable symbol of the mystery of human life; it is, as it were, the visible character in which nature puts the everlasting question, Whence and whither? But even if this reflection does not rise to the surface of consciousness, rivers represent the soul or vital principle of scenery. That a term may suggest a series, if a part make us think of the whole, it must be in some sense intelligible. It must give the clue for further wanderings. In a common-place country there is no suggestion of plan. The hills seem to have been heaped at random, like the mole-heaps in a level field; there is no apparent structure or organic arrangement. There is no reason, we think, why these little ups and downs may not go on for ever, or leave off behind the near horizon. To make a fine scene, we require some principle of unity. The Alps seem to have suggested to early travellers the mere ruins of a world; they were a vast cheerless chaos of gigantic rocks, heaped together at random, and testifying vaguely to some stupendous convulsion. A scene thus viewed could really suggest nothing but horror, that kind of painful feeling with which the mind recognises the hopeless jars and discords of incarnate disorder. Greater familiarity enables one to recover from the shock. The mountains become beautiful as they gradually form themselves into groups, as we begin to see how they rank themselves in varied ranges along the courses of the rivers, bend in gigantic curves round the frontiers of provinces and kingdoms, collect the springs which are to feed the rivers of a continent, and, though not arranged in mechanical and geometrical symmetry, yet form a kind of whole, definitely related to the whole European system. There is a pleasure in simply lying on one's back in some commanding shelf on the side of a valley, and indolently tracing with one's eye the slopes of the hills and the courses of the brooks, until one discovers the spontaneous harmony by which every meadow and mountain side sends down its contingent of water to form the chief torrent of the valley. From being a mere disorderly mob, the mountains become an organised army with some mysterious community

of purpose. This is one reason, perhaps, why there is always a special charm about the summit of a pass. A kind of meaning is suddenly revealed in the midst of wild confusion. Reaching, for example, the top of the Col du Géant, the masses of ice and rock that have been towering in meaningless disorder above your head suddenly fall into line. Symmetry springs out of confusion. The rocks show themselves as tall towers, arranged along the gigantic parapet which divides two contrasted regions. You are between the stern northern lands and the tender valleys of the south. The monstrous labyrinth becomes, in a manner, intelligible; it is the barrier between different climates, civilisations, and histories. Mont Blanc and its myrmidons have been looking down upon you in grim silence, and desolation, like so many monstrous sphinxes; as you top the ridge, they seem to give up some part of their secret, and to say what it is that they are guarding, and why they have been doomed to couch for ever in their mysterious isolation.

This sentiment betrays itself in our tendency to personify any impressive natural object. The mountains are impressive, because they lend themselves to this fancy. An obscure paganism still lurks in our modes of conception, and it is impossible not to attribute some personality to each of the great peaks in value of its apparent character. The huge dome of Mount Blanc suggests a majestic, and, as it were, a metropolitan supremacy, as clearly as the dome of St. Peter's. You cannot look at the Matterhorn without a quick succession of such fancies; the sharp, sudden curve of its outline suggests at one moment the "rearing horse," the embodiment of tameless energy, of exuberant spirits; from another point of view it insists (rather unpoetically) upon putting on the appearance of a cock crowing defiance to the less audacious mountains; when a thundercloud gathers in its lee, above the ghastly precipices of the great accident, it seems to be scowling with diabolical fury; when gleaming in the saffron light of a summer dawn it seems to be plunged in tender musing, and regretting, like Tithonus, its isolation from the world below. And yet, through all changes of mood, it seems, like other mountains, to have a specific temperament of its own. It is not merely by reason of their names that the Jungfrau suggests purity and the Schreckhorn brutality; the Wetterhorn raises its crest with a certain air of aristocratic distinction; and the sharp cone of the Finsteraarhorn breathes a sentiment such as no one but a poet like Shelley could attempt to catch in words. To my mind even lower hills have each a character. I seem to have a personal acquaintance with Scawfell, and to sympathise with his contempt for the tamer Skiddaw; whilst the hills of the English lakes are incomparably more sympathetic to me than their brethren in Wales.

Perhaps this last prejudice is due to certain associations with Eistedfodds, and the like, not so agreeable as they ought to be to the uncultured Saxon. But all such imaginings are too fleeting and individual to express the more permanent elements of mountain beauty. They

involve what Mr. Ruskin calls the pathetic fallacy, and represent at best a mere play of fancy akin to the higher imagination. To force any specific character upon a mountain is to deprive the scenery of that vague multiplicity of suggestion which is its peculiar charm. We must not lower the dignity of nature by attributing to it an individual character, nor supposing that any natural object exists only to influence our petty pastimes. The great wall of China is doubtless an impressive object in its way, but its significance is exhausted when we perceive it to be the product of a struggle between pre-existing races. It is like the shell which a soft-bodied animal throws out for the protection of its body. But the great wall of the Alps or the Himalayas has created, instead of following, the distinction between the neighbouring races. They form the mould into which the nations have been run; they are part of the everlasting framework whose existence outruns our own by indefinite ages, and which have determined the history of the lower organisms, as well as our own, and which may, possibly—who knows?—determine the fate of higher races yet to come.

This view, indeed, is pushed too far by our modern lovers of nature. They make a Juggernaut of the mountain spirit. The more savage and inhospitable the better. He should be represented, according to them, with a stony scowl, surrounded by the bones of victims, and without an ear for human prayer. Describers of mountains seem to take for granted that sublimity must be in proportion to the unreconcilable hostility to mankind of the object of their worship. Such a misanthropic sentiment may be natural in an inhabitant of the Chartreuse, but in ordinary human beings it seems to correspond to a passing phase of affected pessimism. Nature can only be interesting as in some way affecting human interests, and only agreeable as affecting them for good. Natural differ from artificial products, not because simply antagonistic to man, but as being dominant and supreme, instead of completely subjugated. The grandest scenery is not that from which man is altogether absent, nor that which he has tamed and broken, but that in which his victories have been won by submission. Art shows matter thoroughly adapted to human purposes, and nature man adapted to itself. The untameable and unapproachable should be represented sufficiently to prove the supremacy of the underlying forces, but not to exhibit them as purely hostile to our purposes. A mountain is the grandest when the mere barren wilderness of peaks rises above a region enamelled by the patient skill and industry of many generations; where special forms of social life have been developed in conformity with the inexorable conditions; where villages nestle in safe nooks, protected from avalanches and landslips; and slopes have been patiently terraced, till cultivation has crept into every available corner; and wild torrents have been led in aqueducts to fertilise barren ground; where the architecture is adapted so nicely to the needs of the place that buildings harmonise with the scenery as lichens harmonise the colours of a rock; where the

little paths, worn by the feet of many generations, have wound themselves into the most favourable lines more skilfully than if laid down by the most accomplished engineers. Nothing gives such interest to a wild gorge as the zigzags of one of the great Alpine roads, running its way cautiously and steadily, taking advantage of every projecting buttress or hidden gorge, or belt of hanging forest, and, foot by foot, winding upwards like a serpent. Artificial works jar upon the sentiment when they seem to imply that difficulties have been scorned, when, so to speak, the mountain has been carved against the grain; but when they show triumphs won by skilful turning to account of the apparently insuperable obstacles, they give light and meaning to the scenery. Who would not admit that the gorge of the Via Mala, or of the Devil's Bridge in the St. Gothard, or the cliffs of the Ghemmi, are incomparably more impressive by reason of the engineer's skill? A sudden fit of the spleen, or, on the other hand, the exuberance of youthful spirits or the delight in sheer adventure may induce us for a time to prefer the purely savage country; but those districts are most permanently delightful which point most forcibly the Baconian moral of man's conquest of nature by obedience to natural laws. There should, if one may venture to lay down a canon in such matters, be a sufficient reserve of inhospitable wilderness to emphasize the supremacy of nature, to give the impression of a boundless reserve of untamable vigour, but not so vast a stretch of solitude as to suggest a region absolutely cut off from human approach. The mountain should be crowned with the sternest diadem of rock and ice, but its feet should be covered with the mantle of rich cultivation. Hunters and travellers may love the illimitable wastes, for they are a thoughtless race; but ordinary human nature need not be reminded too forcibly of its insignificance.

The characteristic utterances of nature are the ancient commonplaces that we are very small creatures; that infinite worlds stretch beyond our perception, and yet that we can perceive enough to bewilder our intelligence; that our greatest works are but petty scratches on the surface of a world, stupendous to us, and yet but an atom in a vaster system; that we are always in presence of forces which could crush us into dust, but which spare us for a brief space on condition of constant obedience to their laws. These are the commonplaces which have been expressed by thousands of moralists and religious teachers, but which come with perpetual freshness when uttered by the great voices of sea and sky and mountains. They may, as I said at starting, be terrible to one temperament as they are consoling to others. They may, like all else, be turned to account by pessimist or optimist. But to all thoughtful people they must at least be solemnizing. Nature lends itself more easily to the mood which dictated the *Penseroso* than to that embodied in the *Allegro*. Nature is often calming, or rather it is the best of all sedatives, but it is scarcely favourable to high spirits. Petty cares and troubles vanish in the presence of the eternal and

infinite, but any exuberance of exultation verges upon profanity. One may be physically stimulated by fresh breezes and genial sunshine, and one may forgive poets for welcoming the spring as the symbol of everlasting vitality. But there is even in the spring an undercurrent of melancholy to the eye "which has kept watch o'er man's mortality." The new life has to push its way through old decay. Shelley's lark expresses a joyfulness not, as he observes, to be shared by those who can "look before and after." And as, on the whole, one would prefer intelligence, in spite of the alloy of sadness which it brings, I confess that there is something irritating to me about the perpetual exuberance of a lark's spirits. What is there to make such a fuss about? One is disposed to say, "Do you suppose that this is the first occasion on which a primrose ever came out? Are you not aware that in a very short time you will have the cares of a young family on your head, and that at this very moment a hawk (as Sam Weller observed) may have his eye upon you, or that you may be destined to appear very soon in Leadenhall Market?" The world is surely not a place for incessant screams of laughter, or for making such a cachinnation whenever we come to one part of its orbit in space.

The most impressive sounds of nature have always in them a deep strain of melancholy. Wordsworth understood the voices of the hills better than any one. The cry of the cuckoo or the bleat of the lamb is invested for him with a rich, mysterious melancholy. The true essence of the sentiment of lake scenery is compressed into the verses descriptive of the lake under Helvellyn:—

> Here sometimes doth a leaping fish
> Send through the tarn a lonely cheer;
> The crags repeat the raven's croak,
> In symphony austere.

Burns loved to walk under the lea of a wood when a gale was blowing, and to listen to the melancholy murmur of the leaves. And, indeed, the most impressive natural sounds are associated with the same vein of feeling. The moan of the wind and dash of the rain at night, suggestive of tempests blowing far out at sea and across desolate moorlands; the "scream of the maddened beach dragged down by the wave;" the murmur of multitudinous torrents in a mountain valley, rising and falling with every gust of wind, are the most familiar instances; and those whose love of nature is the warmest will generally enjoy them in proportion to their sadness. Coleridge chose to deny, in spite of the general testimony of the poets, that there was anything intrinsically melancholy in the song of the nightingale. If, however, he was right, it only follows that a nightingale becomes impressive simply because the accident of his singing by night adds a factitious melancholy, and therefore gives a specific charm to his note. To me, I confess, there is something still more impressive in the unmusical scream of a sea bird off

a rocky coast. When nature speaks audibly it is almost always in plaintive notes, and the thoughtless exultation of singing-birds in spring is but a solitary exception, and they remind me generally of animated musical boxes. There is a kind of impertinence in their ostentatious proclamation of domestic felicity.

This is, perhaps, a barbarous sentiment, and a final qualification must be added. As some have valued natural scenes in proportion to their misanthropic savagery, others can see in them nothing but an embodiment of sentimental gloom. But this is even a grosser misinterpretation of nature's sadness. The undertone is always plaintive, but the dominant harmony rather suggests stern and inspiriting energy. Nothing can be more alien to fresh sea breezes and mountain torrents than the muddy melancholy of jaded appetite. We may, if we please, see nature in a darkened mirror as one monotonous smudge, without form or sweet contrast. It may be represented as a shadowy garden of Proserpine, in which hope sickens and love decays. But, in fact, nature, though oppressed, is never maudlin. The fitful sigh of the wind and ceaseless murmur of the torrent are impressive because they live. They are unmistakeable signs of life. The apparent repose is not absolute and final, or it would be death. The forces that have framed the world are still in action, as freshly as ever, carving mountain ranges and shaping continents, and producing fresh forms of multitudinous life. They are as the creaking and rattling of the "roaring loom of Time" at its task of the perpetual weaving of the "living raiment of the Godhead." Who can listen unawed to the grinding of the infinite machinery of the material universe? and yet who would not feel that in such a presence mere whining is futile and contemptible? The universe has something else to do than to trouble itself about our valetudinarian ailments. The morbid and effeminate will be crushed to powder in the struggle, and used up, it is to be hoped, as material for higher natures. If the roar of never-ending struggle is sobering, or even saddening, it is as a trumpet-call to whatever is manly and strenuous in our natures. The philosophy of Wordsworth's *Ode to Duty* has been disputed, but its poetical truth is irresistible:—

> Flowers laugh before thee in their beds,
> And fragrance in thy footway treads;
> Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong,
> And the most ancient heavens through thee are fresh and strong.

The everlasting freshness of the universe, the perpetual triumph of life over decay, is the final meaning of the great spectacle of nature, and the most forcible stimulus to doing our part in the struggle.

The Tyranny of Fashion.

THERE is to be found at the heart of modern society a large and increasing minority of women, whose various occupations leave them neither time nor inclination to follow in that fantastic dance of fashion which is instituted for the employment of the inane, and the profit of milliners. It is worthy of inquiry whether some quiet haven, safe from the ceaseless perturbations of this disturbing influence, might not be found for those who are now dragged reluctantly with the current, or for such as, affecting to defy it, are wallowing helplessly in the trough of dowdyism. In the one case, much of energy, in the other, much of practical efficiency, is lost; the unwilling follower, conscious of being always a day too late, is fussy and impatient while suffering from a feeling of self-abasement, and the rebellious sister who has dropped out of the existing system before any other has been organised to receive her, skulks in and out of the feast of life in the disadvantageous position of one who has not on the "wedding garment."

It has long since come to be felt and acted on in the case of men, that these restless shiftings in the fashion of clothes are incompatible with the grave concerns which go to fill up a worthy human career; and for them the evil has practically ceased. That the time must come when relief from the foolish oppression extends to women also, can scarcely be matter of doubt; it remains only to be seen how far the hour is advanced, and in what form the amelioration is likely to appear.

If many-voiced dissatisfaction at the hard work (never ending and leading nowhere) entailed upon women by the gyrations of fashion, may be taken as a sign of the ripeness of the time, then might it seem that any standard of revolt would be likely to attract a large following; but such in effect has not proved to be the case. There have been practical appeals from advanced outposts in the extreme west, and æsthetic appeals nearer home, which have failed to meet adequate response; from which it may be gathered that in order to any large result, the scheme offered must embrace a wider sphere of human aims than has been acknowledged by any of those innovators who have yet proffered arms to the recalcitrants.

Unless the foundations of human society and the relations of the sexes, and not the foundations of society alone, but the very constitution of things, were shaken as they never can be shaken, women, whether busy or idle, earnest or frivolous, will not cease to be solicitous of the impression their appearance may create. We must accept it as a fact that this

solicitude, however attempered by circumstances, can never be generally suppressed; and, therefore, that the disadvantages attending the inert resistance to fashion which results in what has been called "dowdyism," or of the positive resistance whose only watchword is "use," are little likely to find welcome at the hands of any large proportion of even the most occupied of the sex. The harbour of refuge to be provided one day for that cultured *élite* among women who are beginning to feel the tyranny of fashion intolerable, must be one from which beauty is not banished, but where, on the contrary, it finds its securest anchor in use. It would not be difficult to prove that it is through the letting go of this anchor that the whole matter at issue has come at this moment to be so hopelessly adrift. The "coigne of vantage" for which we are on the look-out, must, it may be presumed, be one possessing such ennobling associations in the far past, as would remove it from all competition with the things of to-day, and all contempt of the things of to-morrow; if such a rallying point exist, it will be marked by a monument which genius having eternalised, time can do no more but hallow. It will be obvious to most people in what direction our gaze has turned, and all who are capable of recognising beauty as apart from present fashion,—a far smaller moiety of those even who have the cant of culture on their lips than might be supposed,—will readily admit that from the æsthetic side, our view is wholly advantageous; it is on the point of "fitness" that those doubts will be raised which it is hoped successfully to meet further on. For the present it will be convenient, on behalf of those who have only vaguely formulated to themselves the case against modern female dress, to resume briefly the nature and extent of the evils resulting from the loss of every principle of reason, before advancing further.

To begin with, the price of being beautiful according to the standard of the "mode" is at this particular moment heavy and grievous beyond precedent. The manufacture of the simplest-looking modern gown, closely sheathing two-thirds of the body as it is required to do, has become an affair demanding not only an inordinate degree of skill in the fitter, but a ruinous amount of time, patience, and money on the part of the person fitted. Such a gown has as many pieces as a Chinese puzzle, and the difficulty of putting them together is as unproductive of any valuable result. We live in an age which we are wont to call "busy," and we are resolved to justify its title. We do not leave even to the moth its proper work, but begin with our own hands to "fret" our garments before they are made. Our damasks and brocades are all hacked to death, cut remorselessly through leaves and flowers, and the stalk joined irrelevantly to the heart of the rose, and the mutilated bud to the thorn. Upon this false and complicated foundation comes the even more vile and yet more elaborate worrying of the tissue, which is known under the name of "trimming." If the *cordons blue* of millinery begin by making a hash of their material, they end by making a mince. The rich stuff is chopped into fractional bits, and served up in various devices. How very heavy

is the result of all this costly cookery, those only can tell who are condemned to bear it. The carrying about of a gown thus "trimmed," with its burthen of bows—all in the wrong place—and its ironically named puffs, would make a serious item in the day's work of a porter. It would be difficult for a mind untrained in folly, if one can conceive of the existence of such, to arrive at any conclusion as to the object of this laborious effort; the obvious one of enabling the performer to carry the dust and pollutions of the atmosphere about the person, appearing unsatisfactory. As little claim in the light of pure reason might be conceded to the idea that these toilers were tasking themselves in the interest of beauty. That a breathing woman should yield her body to be bound and trussed until it looked as dead as a wooden doll—a thing into which but for its surroundings you would not hesitate to drive nails—would certainly be held by such untaught reason impossible. But assuming that the reason invoked could be made to accept this deformed and stolid mould for the beautiful living frame, it would surely meet the lying tale told further on with indignant denial. For beneath the seeming frankness of modern raiment, there lives not a hint of truth. To the minor make-believe of padding which the senile want of reticence in latter-day dress necessitates, allusion is not here made; we would stigmatise that deeper falsehood which is ever offering to our acceptance the protean monsters of outworn fancy in place of the divine image; which having not long since decreed to the lower half of the person the aspect of a bulbous root, now gives to the wooden doll above the termination of a mermaid below.

But no more; such is the omnipotence of fashion with the majority, it were hopeless at this moment to think of establishing by argument that a single leg may not suffice for beauty; before this truth can be carried home to all minds, we must be content to wait the time when the great arbitrator has decreed again that there shall be no legs at all, or haply that there shall be three. A good illustration of the perverse influence of the tyrant is that an eloquent apology for the teetotum versus the human form was made during the reign of crinoline by a sculptor of eminence to the present writer; and if the whole truth must be told, without dissent from his interlocutor.

In despair therefore of proving that fashionable clothes are ugly, we will return to the charge against them on less fortified ground. Allowing that the effect of the single leg is charming, nobody can pretend that the manner in which it is brought about—the being tied by the two—is pleasant. As hard would it be to maintain that it is agreeable to be sitting on bows of ribbon, on bunches of folds, on keys, or a purse, or on all together; or to be feeling after a "tail" that is painting itself in the mud, with something less than the grace of an antiquated kitten. The strain against the knees of an ordinary travelling dress shortened for action—that dress in which a young woman occasionally rivals the mountaineering feats of her husband or brothers—is such that the endurance she

makes proof of should be rated as double. That a woman can look trim about the waist, and at the same time be drawing regular and deep inspirations of breath, like those which minister to the vigour and the sounder health of men, is a pretence that is sometimes made by the disingenuous; but not the less true is it that in this as in all other respects, she consents to be heavily handicapped in that race of life which is becoming daily more strenuous for many of the competitors. To these manifold disadvantages, it may be added, that the vast amount of labour expended on modern clothing is labour of the most disheartening, wearisome, and stultifying kind. The yards—the miles would hardly be a gross exaggeration—of pipings, pleatings, and puffings, which go to make up the life's work of thousands of our fellow-beings, are utterly without ennobling suggestion, as much cut off from the joy and beauty of the universe as they are from its use and service. The man who points a pin has a less unsatisfactory share in the work of the world. His soul is not necessarily subdued to his calling; his hand alone may become the machine, for the fashion of pins is unchanging. But it is in the interests of the wearers and not the workers of our women's clothes, that we are engaged in formulating their demerits. Allowing that to eyes trained in a long course of the grotesque, the dress of the day is wholly delightful; that its lines, if they do not suggest natural form, hint at outlines more pleasing and original; still, its undeniable defects of opposition to the laws of health, and wastefulness of much that is most precious in life, remain, and must alone be held sufficient to justify the desire of reasonable women for the reduction of so inordinate a tax.

It has been said that signs of revolt from the tyranny of fashion are in the air; if it be so it may be hoped that help is near, and if near, that its means may be somewhere within sight. Those who are most cognisant of the special need, are agreed as to what is wanted in one particular, which is shelter from the ceaseless torrent of change. All else as regards this question, is secondary; to the weight the unlikeliest part of the frame will in time become fitted; the organs will learn to keep house in their prison; the legs to forget their liberty; the arms restrict themselves to employment at a low level; but that when all these useful things have been learnt, we should have to unlearn them again; that at the moment of ultimate triumph over these difficulties we should have to turn *volte face*, and envisage new ones with weakened powers; that, worse than all, we should be called upon to build up in the sweat of our own brows the materials of each new claim—this is an overflow of bitterness which it is scarcely conceivable could have been endured so long.

There may be unsympathising outsiders to whom it will appear that no such refuge from the evils of change as that here invoked, is needed; that an attitude of steady resistance to all extremes would be sufficient to protect those desirous of protection from the incursions of folly. It cannot be known to such objectors, if indeed they exist, how constant and wearing is the pressure from without, or how insecure are the founda-

tions upon which resistance has to be offered. A stand made upon any basis of reason might perhaps be maintained against equal pressure; but a position taken up on the sands of an absurdity to which "use and wont" alone have reconciled us for a time, would not fail before long to render firmness ridiculous. The fault of that system of clothing which we see blown about by every breath of fashion, lies deeper than the surface. Whatever the changes wrought upon it, the ground idea of elaborately shaped and tailored garments remains; it is here that it will be found to differ essentially from any standard of dress which right reason could acknowledge, or noble art deign to perpetuate.

In all times and places where the clothing of the body has formed part of a living art, it will be seen on examination to be wrought by the most simple and seemingly artless means. The dress of the Indian ayah, in which a scarf eight yards in length is made to form, without pin or thread, a garment incomparably graceful and convenient, and that of all ranks in ancient Hellas, offer extreme or typical examples of this employment of easy means to admirable and varied ends. Not utterly removed from this noblest ideal, is the quaintly beautiful dress of Japan, and that of the Flowery Land, coloured like an orchid, has a life and permanent character of its own. These, and more or less all peoples of the superior races, who have not been tainted with the Birmingham distemper, enrobe themselves in a manner suited to the dignity of ease and the free play of natural grace; as free, and not slaves to their belongings. How the art of dress came to be corrupted with us, it does not enter into our present scheme to inquire; it is sufficient for our purpose to point out the fact, and invite those whom culture has prepared to admit it, to the conclusion it naturally leads to. And that conclusion is, that those who are in pursuit of stability, convenience, or beauty in this matter of dress, would do well to return to first principles. The writer can imagine the half-amused horror with which this announcement may be greeted in some quarters; the blanket of the Indian will suggest itself; nor has our reference to the dress worn in ancient Greece given rise to more reassuring conclusions. An idea would seem to prevail that not only was the climate of ancient Hellas tempered to the lamb shorn wholly of covering, but that this people was so beloved of its gods that they all—to a woman—died young. With these notions current among us, it might be matter of surprise that clothes, even the most diaphanous, are to be seen on their statues; all the more that they are so often missing from our own. Perhaps when the turn of modern England comes for apotheosis in the clouds of Oceanic fancy, we may be conceived of as having been favoured in like manner. In sober fact, and notwithstanding that the aim of sculpture must ever be the glorification of the human form, the statues of the great age of Pericles are clothed. It is this which may offer ground for some natural surprise until study has taught us to feel how these garments, a-flutter with life and action, are made to surround the forms they veil as with an aura which enlarges the sphere of their

vitality. If the old Greek chose by preference youthful shapes for the purpose of decoration, his practice cannot be said to be bettered by our own; the flower of life in the moment of its eclosion will ever be dear to art, and it is a subject for gratulation that in Greek statues and fictile vases so many and needed hints of the reverent treatment of age should have been put on record. The archeologist of the future will, it is to be hoped, look in vain for any sculptural presentment of the modern "cap," whereas the veil which swathes the throat in its charitable folds is a familiar object in ancient work. That two out of the nine figures of the Niobe group have long sleeves, seems in some way to have escaped general observation.

Let us pause, before venturing further, to inquire what might be the typical character of a dress which could be supposed capable of offering that refuge from the tempest of fashion for which we are a-gaze. There can, it is presumed, be no doubt that it should be simple in plan, and that such changes in its lines as the frailty of our nature demand from time to time, should be produced, not by alteration of structure, but by method of adjustment. From the groundwork of such a system, the element of fancy should be excluded; all should proceed on the lines laid down by law in relation to the human frame; that is, the weight should be set where it is least oppressive, the organs left to their free development, the muscles and limbs to their fullest play, and the whole appliance be made and seen to subserve the advantage of the wearer. It would be well that the garments should be put together according to established rule, and so as to receive character and not impose it upon the person. They should be easy to wash where the material admitted of such purification, and should not occupy an undue space either in wearing, keeping, or carrying about. Finally, a dress to suit—we will not say all women for all time, but only a certain number of impatient sufferers for a little breathing space—should be, as we have before observed, removed from vulgar comparison, by association with some great and enduring moment of the past—immortalising associations which would keep the thing reflected on from being either old or new—associations whose revived presence in our midst would be felt as an impulse of higher life throughout the whole sphere of culture.

The fact that a system of clothing—of clothing for both sexes—possessing all the advantages here set forth, was actually worn by the higher class of Britons for a period of nearly 400 years, seems to have passed very generally out of the recollection of those even whose delight in the beauty of classical drapery under classical conditions is the most sincere. That the Romans did, however, wear such a dress, and that this dress, with but slight alteration, was the dress of ancient Greece, is known to all; and that the Romanised Britons, the higher ranks of these Islands, adopted and wore during the period of their stay, and beyond it, the dress of their Roman conquerors, will admit of easy verification by those who are interested in the fact. Since it will hardly be contended that

the climate of the northern parts of England included under the name of Cumbria, or of the, at that time, thickly populated highlands of Snowdonia, has undergone radical change, it must be conceded that the garb worn by the chiefs and their household followers was one which could provide adequate protection against the rigours of our skies. It may ndeed be doubted, in view of these several centuries of adoption, if any dress which has been worn among us, borrowers as we have been from every quarter of the earth, and every region of fancy, would, if its normal type did not constitute it universal, have a better claim to be accounted national.

All roads are said to lead to Rome; in affairs of culture it would be a truer word, that all roads lead to Greece. Let us admit at last, frankly and fully, that it is to the sublimated common sense of its young intelligence that we ourselves should point for the cure of the insanities of modern fashion. The bare reading of the prescription for making an oblong piece of stuff, or double shawl, into a Greek tunic or chyton, is enough to affect us as with a breath of health. Receiving into the mind, after the bewildering vagaries of the mode, an idea so fenced in by law, we feel as a patient sickened by dissipation in prospect of a regimen wherein each act of his life is judiciously ordered. But the prescription shall be given to the reader, that he may judge for himself of its efficacy.

The length of the Greek chyton is the height of the wearer, measured from the crown of the head; the width, twice the length, so that the garment forms a square when sewn up—the square, that is, of the person with the arms extended. There is a hem at the bottom, and the trimming, if any, is placed immediately above it. Four loops are now set on the upper edge, back and front, at a distance of rather less than the width of the shoulders apart. A small bunch of pleats is made where each loop is sewn on, and the border of the stuff turned in about two inches. (Observe the excellent engineering; how the pleats and doubling of the stuff strengthen the hold of the loops, while the one gives richness to the folds, the other softness to the upper line of the dress.) The facture of the garment is now complete; before putting it on, a length of firm ribbon is crossed over the back and breast, and fastened securely at the waist. On this—well to the front of each shoulder, just at the point where a milkmaid carries her pails—two ornamental buttons are sewn, and to these the tunic is hung by its four loops. Sleeves to the elbow may be formed by other buttons and loops, if not provided for, as for day wear would be the case, from beneath. The dress being fastened on the shoulders, the zone completes its adjustment, the wearer drawing the garment through it in front, and still more at the sides, until the convenient length is attained. With some knowledge of the hang of classic drapery, no difficulty is found in disposing the folds in a manner to set tailoring at defiance.

Such is the method of producing the garment which may be taken as

the type of all that is noblest in dress. Over this tunic it was the practice of Grecian women, as well for purposes of dignity and state as for warmth, to drape shawls and scarfs in an endless variety of arrangement, and it is evident that such additions would facilitate successful effect where awkwardness of figure or clumsiness of hand might otherwise interfere.*

We have then in view a dress, the making of which would be the work of half-an-hour; a dress offering the framework of a system from which it would seem that all we are now in want of might be developed. It is simple, and susceptible of variety otherwise than by practical jokes played upon the human form. It is so much under the control of law, that even the little labour called for in putting it together is regulated, not empirical. There is not a muscle or a limb which it restricts in its action; its seemingly flowing drapery being all upon the person, is never in the way of the wearer or others; and its weight is so disposed that it is practically unfelt. With the power of development inherent in elementary forms, it can be made suitable to every stage of life and variation of climate. It is easy to wash, easier to pack, and its length can be regulated at pleasure. It possesses associations with the greatest moment of culture, and has an ever-present and enduring standard. On its beauty it were needless to insist, since the point must be conceded by persons least capable of feeling it, on the witness of authority such as it is to be feared will never more be equalled in the history of our planet: the sculptors of Attic Greece delighted to reproduce its combinations. Add to this that its beauty, while susceptible of great and legitimate enrichment, is compatible with poor material and an almost total absence of labour, and that it is modest and "womanly" beyond comparison with any fashion to be seen in our day. As set against these unquestionable advantages, and others not less important which have been yet but hinted at, it may be conceived that the adoption of garments so far removed in method of production from our present practice might subject the innovator to invidious remark. To this it is replied that the general outline and "hang" of the shawls or stuffs thus arranged makes so near an approach to that obtained by the cutting and goring, the piecing and ligatures of the present mode, that an eye uninformed of the facility of the means employed would be slow to discover them for itself. The experiment of assembling a number of ladies of all ages in the garb of ancient Greece has lately been tried on a somewhat extensive scale; and notwithstanding that the measures taken were generally successful in securing adherence to the simple type, that is, that shawls, or oblong pieces of

* It should be borne in mind that the garment described is offered only as typical of the simplicity and sincerity of the Greek idea. Of that idea numerous modifications were employed among the ancients, and many more would naturally arise in practice among moderns, which, if they did not retain all the simple grace of the above, might offer a compromise more acceptable to vitiated taste. The blouse form is an example of such a compromise.

stuff, wholly uncut, and with few stitches in them, made all the *frais* of the toilettes, the effect obtained, though admittedly beautiful and becoming, differed so slightly from that to be seen in many artistic circles of the day, that the learned pundits, who had thought to behold animated statues, were disappointed. It was pronounced that with the exception of some half dozen, who might have walked the streets of ancient Athens unchallenged, the remaining ladies could have appeared equally without critical notice in Belgravia or Bloomsbury; a greater freedom of gait, a breath of unwonted life, and a certain ennobling power, being things rather to be felt than commented on.

It has been objected that natural draperies, unhacked and untailored (for of such is Greek dress), are not only inconvenient, but unbecoming to any but the young and comely. Of the first charge our preceding remarks may be held to have disposed, but the second is, alas! in one sense too true; no dress can rejuvenate the aged, or make beautiful the ugly. As to exceptions on the score of convenience, such come strangely from persons who have been victims in turn to every disqualifying folly of the mode, and whose every step is being made at this moment with an effort equal to that of wading through water. As little are the fears expressed in the matter of "becomingness" consistent on the part of those who for the last eighteen months have been victims of a fashion as merciless to defects of person as if invented in cruel irony; and who are now resignedly offering each disgrace of nature or "scorn of time" to the examination of unsympathising spectators. That fashion should compel the display of a shape barren of beauty, wanting in due proportion, or hopelessly run to seed, without a fold to relieve the desolation or attenuate the outline, is proof not alone of its brutal tyranny, but of the obfuscation of the æsthetic sense it has the power to inflict. Apart from this insidious despotism, it could surely not require extraneous proof that an ill-made, over-fat or over-lean female form would offer a pleasanter object for contemplation when made to serve as a point of attachment for draperies whose fall has a beauty of their own. What indeed might have to be admitted as nearer to the truth is, that such draperies have a tendency, not certainly to reduce to a level, but to raise the maltreated something nearer to the eminence enjoyed by the favourites of nature; it might even have to be conceded that where much is obscured or softened which pitifully appeals to such charity, some exceptional beauty might, in accepting the conditions of Greek dress, be debarred that loud proclamation it is permitted now to make of itself. If this were so, indeed, it were a generous sacrifice on the part of the few possessed of this special mark of the favour of the gods, on behalf of the many less richly endowed.

As a protection against the rigours of the weather when abroad, a shawl, square or long, according as it was used as a cloak or a wrap, had with the ancients still to do duty. An inquiry into the various methods of "throwing" this wrap so as to ensure the exact amount of protection

needed—methods all graceful, and held to be significant of the status and breeding of the bearer—would lead us into paths where to follow our gracious guides we should need an address and personal initiative such as our habits have tended to suppress. Suffice it to say that there is no necessary reason why any garment, provided its form were simple and honest, should not be worn above a gown whose chief distinction lay in the possession of these characteristics.

That such a dress would cut from the heads of women much of the head-gear which has been seen on them for many a decade past, will scarcely be held to its discredit by those whose advance in the path of "sweetness and light" has brought them to a point from which the inherent grotesque of such objects has become apparent. It is not likely that a matron in the garb of Penelope would be found admonishing her household in a doll's cap. If a doubt can be entertained that the thing we are agreed to call a bonnet would find its most significant adornment in bells, a glance at the bonnet of five years past would prove the point to demonstration. But it is not always easy to obtain such witness; the flimsiness and trumpery of these costly structures consigning them to the rag-bag before a fifth of that time has passed over them. There are signs, however, that hats and bonnets are for a time to be worn on the head; which restoration to an obvious purpose would redeem them from ridicule and incongruity.

It would seem then that if protection from the follies of fashion be among the attainable good things of the future, it will be found in consulting that fine sense of fitness, that idealised common sense, which in its last resort resulted in the creation of the Parthenon. It is not beauty, it is not the saving of money, it is not even the raising of the standard of health, which is felt to be the supreme need in this matter; it is simply the conservation of energy. Certainly at no period of the world's progress has the mind of man or woman been so prepared to rejoice at any easy adjustment of means to ends, as at this present. The hurry of life in our great centres is unparalleled, and for women, with the burthens which are their natural heritage, new paths of labour are opening day by day. Many a working woman who now, from her utter incapacity to afford the time, thought, and money needed for the elaboration of modern dress, bears the stigma of "strong-mindedness," would be able, if the matter were relieved of its difficulty, to carry on her labours unimpeded by the reproach. That the sting of it is often felt where most accepted is certain; for it is inconceivable that women who are turning high gifts to account are wanting as a rule in a love for the beautiful, truer if less devouring than that which actuates the puppet of fashion. That they lay this love, with perhaps many another, down upon the altar of progress, is an item in the sum of sacrifice in which such lives abound. There are women, and such may even constitute a majority, who delight in the fickleness of fashion; and there are some to whom that fickleness gives the sole occupation which fills up their empty

days. Let them keep it, in the name of sacred folly; but why should the frivolous many be suffered for ever to impose the sliding scale of a vexatious tax upon the worthier few?

That the adoption by a minority of busy and æsthetically cultured women, of a dress making some approach to ancient simplicity, would seriously tell on the mantua-makers' trade, may be more than doubted. It is not by the custom of such ladies that the exorbitant gains of the magnates of the class are swollen; and if it were it would be hard to say on what ground any appeal to our sympathy on behalf of such persons could be made. These artists (*sic*) stand self-condemned in their own *ateliers*, surrounded not by forms of eternal beauty, but by a headless crowd of deformed phantoms—the blocks which represent their sole ideal of that shape in which all the visible beauty of creation culminates. The culture of this one of the arts of life is left to impudent pretenders, men and women whose ideas of beauty are profoundly vitiated; who are for the most part wholly ignorant of the structure and play of the bodies they denaturalise, and who are constantly exposed to temptations of self-interest, which cause them to invent and set afloat the succession of costly vagaries which are beggaring thousands of lives. The serious concerns and varied aims of the better minds tend more and more to detach them from questions of secondary interest; and thus fashion has become a will-o'-the-wisp, a product of the swampiest flats of human intelligence, and the so-called art of dress relegated to those smug dwellers in low places who fatten upon folly. For its more humble professors, and the whole class of journeywomen, the elevation in the kind of work that would follow upon simplified forms of dress, would be a gain of which it is difficult to estimate the extent. The wasted labour of these poor white slaves is an evil so serious that although it has been touched upon and passed, as beside the immediate question, a word more in this place must be said upon it. Theirs is an industry not only poorly paid and profitless in its result, but one which, spent upon ephemeral forms, partakes of their shiftiness, and reacts injuriously upon the worker. Not alone does it afford no field for the exercise of the higher faculties, but it is made hopeless by the sense of transitoriness. The latest product of the fancy of the man-milliner, heavy with toil, and involved as a bad dream, will have become "old clothes" before the gloss is off the silk. It is contended that labour can only confer dignity on the labourer, when it carries with it a sense of use, or is applied to permanent forms. The shawl or square of stuff which receives enrichment at the hands of the needlewoman is such a form, and offers a legitimate field for beautiful design and careful execution; if its worthier specimens were signed like other masterpieces of art—signed by designer and executant alike when the two were not combined—it would be to the advantage of all concerned.

If little has been advanced as to the costliness in money of modern raiment, it is because its wastefulness in much that is more precious than

money makes a graver indictment against it; and, notwithstanding some recent and notorious examples, it would perhaps be difficult to prove that on the whole the item is utterly out of relation to other excesses of a luxurious epoch. There is reason to believe that the dress of ancient Greece was, if not necessarily, still possibly as costly, while it was certainly immeasurably more rich. As little has the question of the injurious effect of pressure upon health been insisted on; and that for the reason that all such insistance has been proved past hope to be vain. A custom that has long found such obstinate adherence must possess a hold in some sentiment of our nature; even as the distorted Chinese foot favours the idea of dependent helplessness which has been widely held to be a charm in woman. In the case of the compressed waist, the motive is not far to seek. Clothes that are fitted to the frame have an inclination to strain and in straining to become thinner over the protuberant curves, while they lie loosely over the receding; from which it follows that in a mode of dress wherein the whole outline is exhibited, there arises a temptation to add to the effect of those diminished curves by binding and pinching. Against this temptation, the physiologist will continue to appeal in vain.

If relief from these manifold oppressions is to be looked for in our day, it may safely be predicted that it either must come shortly or await another turn in the wheel—shall we say the rack—of Fashion? It is the aim of the tyrant at this moment, by her ever-tortuous means, to impart a false air of simplicity to modern raiment, while a modestly (some may think an immodestly) slender claim is made for it upon space above the ground level. One word of advice to the fair Amazons of the period. They would do well, with a view to distant effect, to eschew light pink, and notably flesh-colour in the choice of their "cuirasses." Blue as a tint would be preferable, since the appearance of being dressed only in wode is an advance on being habited in nothing at all. Now this mock simplicity, and this slender claim upon space, might possibly make true simplicity, and the actual size of the human frame, tolerable at the present moment. Let us take the time as we find it. The bodies we see, may be "clothed upon," but when their semblance is changed, and they appear once more as the monsters of some delirious dream, no miracle would get them into the garments of health.

The tyranny of the steel trap in which all the women of the civilised world were caught some few years since was such, that a lady became a beggar without her hoops, and was set upon by the dogs in the street.

Great was Diana of the Ephesians, and great was Pallas Athene; but greater by far is our Goddess of Fashion, whose allies are in the kennel as in the court.

Who shall deliver us from the terror of her frown?

E. P.

Posting and Post-offices in China.

For such a vast population as that of China, and considering the active internal trade which is everywhere being carried on between city and city, not only to supply the wants, but to provide the luxuries, of so numerous a people, it is wonderful what defective means of locomotion they are content to put up with year after year and generation after generation. The term "Posting," with which this article is headed—conveying as it does to our minds associations with the good old days when travellers coached merrily and comfortably behind splendid and well-appointed teams at the rate of twelve miles an hour—can scarcely be said to be applicable to any system of locomotion prevalent in China. The utmost that the country can boast of in the way of horsed vehicles is the "ma-chay," or two-wheeled cart, the appearance, comfort, and speed of which may be imagined if the reader can picture to himself one of the old Bath sedans with the bottom cut short off, and then mounted upon a springless clumsy frame, rolling upon two as clumsy wheels, and drawn by a sorry worn-out mule or pony, over roads to which the application of the name "corduroy" would be a euphemism. Taking stoppages, owing to the condition of road, hunger and thirst of driver and beast, accidents, &c., into consideration, the speed at which such a machine would cover the ground might be handsomely estimated at from five to six miles the hour. These vehicles are mostly used in North China, and the gentlemen as well as the ladies who have the honour of representing European States at Pekin and thereabouts might, if questioned, be able to give some very interesting, not to say melancholy, reminiscences of their experiences of travel after this sort. To Chinese, however, this sedan-cart, or cart-sedan, whichever it may be termed, is quite a stylish turn-out, mandarins of the highest grade indulging in their use, and they may constantly be seen curtained and lined with the finest cloth or silk, and cushioned with the softest and costliest of furs. Their one great lack is springs, and, curiously enough, the invention of John Chinaman, practical as it is in most cases, has not compassed the idea of saving his skin and bones to this extent, whether as regards the body or the shafts of the conveyance.

Another wheeled vehicle, equally characteristic but atrocious with the cart-sedan, is the wheeled barrow, or "chotsze." Not anything like the machine with a terminal wheel and box-like capacity which we are accustomed to associate with the name; but a much more ingenious conveyance, in which the passengers sit nearly back to back, with their faces outwards, and legs pendant, luggage, &c. cleverly packed alongside of

them. Could an Irish car be reduced to miniature size, its two wheels removed, and a huge centre wheel substituted, running under and between the two seats, and could a Chinaman be placed between the shafts, face towards the car, and driving it backwards, the metamorphosis would come nearer representing the Chinese wheelbarrow than anything we can describe. These barrows carry both passengers and goods, and are constructed of two sizes—the smaller driven by one man, and having a carrying capacity of four passengers, or three to four hundredweight; and the larger, requiring a tracker in front, in the shape of a man or donkey, and equal to the conveyance of double that quantity. Often in long journeys, the passengers for a consideration get the driver to fit over their heads a hood of oiled paper, stretched upon bamboo framework, to keep out the rain and dust; and at times the driver eases his load by planting a stanchion on either side, and making sail, when the wind proves conducive, thus giving practical exemplification of the truth of the lines—

> —— On the barren plains
> Of Sericana, where Chineses drive
> With sails and wind their cany waggons light.

A striking peculiarity of this class of conveyance is the excruciating shriek which they invariably give vent to when on the move, owing to the fact that both axle and box of the wheel are made of wood. Chinese passengers appreciate this music, but it was found so torturing in the foreign settlement of Shanghae, that the municipal council was compelled to pass a statute forbidding the noise, on pain of forfeiture of the barrow; and it was always amusing to observe how careful John Chinaman was to stop his barrow on entering municipal limits, tilt it on end, and grease up previously to venturing upon foreign policed territory. Wheelbarrows, like their *congeners* the carts, are confined to certain tracts of the country only, and constitute, as a rule, the vehicle of the midland provinces. In Shanghae itself they have been obliged to give way to a great extent to the "Ginrickshaw," or man-cart, a Japanese introduction of recent date, which is a light two-wheeled spring gig, drawn with ease at a rapid trot by one man, and capable of holding two passengers. The facility of jumping in and out of this conveyance, and the speed at which it may be bowled along the excellent roads of Shanghae, combine to recommend its use to the shrewd Chinaman, slow although he be as a rule to take up with new-fangled and foreign notions. The fares paid to the wheelbarrow drivers are wonderfully low. Their remuneration depends much upon the level and condition of road traversed, as well as upon the load carried; but a fair idea of its reasonable character may be gathered from the fact that one passenger can be conveyed from one end of the Shanghae settlements to the other, a distance of about two miles, for the ridiculous sum of 25 cash, equal to about a penny of our money. In some of the districts in which the wheelbarrow is the favourite vehicle, public convenience and facility of

traffic have been so far consulted by the road-makers, that grooved stone slabs have been carefully laid along the centres of principal tracks, so as to form a sort of tramway—proving that, in spite of governmental antipathy to rail and tramways as proposed by foreigners, the principle has been practically applied by themselves, in the case of wheelbarrow traffic, years, if not cycles, ago.

But, although Chinamen do not seem to consider speed much of an object in travel, comfort is by no means a consideration which they always dispense with. This they secure to the utmost extent of their fancy in boats, which are after all the principal means of conveyance throughout the country. The many broad and lengthy rivers which intersect most parts of China, the magnificent lakes scattered here and there, and the complicated network of canals which connect these rivers and lakes in every direction, afford vast facilities for boat-travel, which are availed of to the utmost by an enterprising and ever-moving population. The different styles of craft which ply upon Chinese waters are simply beyond enumeration, and a curious and voluminous book might be written illustrative of the subject, if only some one could be found able and willing to devote his time and research to the preparation of such a work. In boats, as in everything else, Chinese art has taken a stereotyped shape; and, although the several varieties, as above remarked, are so numerous as to defy estimate, yet one particular pattern is so blindly followed in the construction of each variety, that boats of the same class resemble each other to a nicety; and a boat-builder would as soon think of departing from the usages of his ancestors as regards food or dress as put a boat together with one peg, plank, or rope not traditionally correct.

The mere mention of a Chinese craft is suggestive to the European of a fabric so grotesque, clumsy, and unmanageable as to be practically useless, and æsthetically a mistake. The notion is founded on what most travellers have seen of the sea-going junk, which nevertheless, clumsy as it may look, possesses a wonderful carrying capacity, and, as regards safety and speed, may well compare with crafts such as our waters could boast of eighty or a hundred years ago. But in the inner waters of China this clumsiness to a great extent disappears, and shapes and lines may be frequently observed, artistic enough to gratify the lover of the picturesque, if not to satisfy the strictly professional eye. When grouped together Chinese craft are always seen to advantage; and the picture becomes peculiarly effective when a setting sun gilds with its rays the graceful curves of prow and stern, and mellows all the rich tints reflected from sail, mast, and hull.

But our business is at present with only one class of Chinese craft, those used for travelling purposes. Let the reader imagine himself upon the Grand Canal, the great highway between Tientsin and Hangchow, and which, in spite of generations of neglect and the repeated revolutions that have ravaged its thickly populated banks, is still a noble stream.

Up and down, going and coming, he will see a ceaseless stream of craft of all hues, shapes, and sizes; some sailing, some rowing, some sculling, some poling, some towing, and all being urged on energetically towards their several destinations. Here is a local passenger-boat, plying probably between one city and another, crowded with human beings who squat or lie upon its uncovered deck, heedless of the loss of time and regardless of weather or risk from accident, whilst the vessel heels over to a passing puff of wind. Next may be seen a handy highly-varnished boat propelled by a powerful scull, and making good way through the water even against the wind. Every part is closely and ingeniously covered over, and not a man is visible save the solitary worker at the scull. But if a peep be taken into the glass window, set in a quaintly-carved frame in the boat's side, there may be seen the passenger comfortably seated at a table in a cosy cabin, his book, pipe, and tea by his side, and his little store of luggage neatly disposed on a settle in the corner. Opposite him is his bed-place, on which is daintily spread his quilt of many colours, supplemented by a foreign blanket or two piled up ready for use. A luxurious fellow is the said passenger, and he lives well moreover; for is not his favourite body-servant in the next compartment busy preparing a dish of pork stew and rice for his master's dinner? He does not hope to reach his destination, 100 miles away, for two days at least; but what of that when he has so many comforts about him *en route*? But hark! the clamour of a gong loudly and rapidly beaten is heard; it proclaims the approach of a high mandarin's travelling-barge. A huge complicated craft, as broad nearly as it is long, but gay with streamers and gaudy colours, sails past, followed by a convoy of several other boats many degrees smaller. The great square sail is slung, not from a mast but a triangle, and seems to be made up of patches of inscribed cotton in various tints—red, black, and blue. Ask a bystander why this is, and he will tell you that it is customary for mandarins when travelling on the water to present the boatmen on leaving with their titular banners or scrolls; and the boatmen pride themselves on flaunting as high titles as they can procure by way of patchwork on their sails. The craft itself is so capacious as to contain a number of roomy compartments which are nicely furnished and devoted to the accommodation of the mandarin, his family, and servants, all of whom can find comfortable lodgment under its roof. Outside is carefully slung under cover the official sedan-chair, which is needed at every halting station to enable the great man to return the calls of ceremony made upon him. On either side of the boat are displayed the scarlet boards which usually stand at the main gate of the official residence to announce the titles and honours of the occupant within, as well as to warn all intruders to be awestruck and silent in the majestic presence. Every now and then "bang" goes the gong, and everyone stares in respectful wonderment as the dignitary passes by. Mandarins travel in this way for many hundred miles, and occupy at times weeks and months on the

journey. In the case of a very high official, such as a viceroy or imperial commissioner, it is the etiquette for all local officials *en route* to wait on the traveller and speed him on his way, finding him in boats, provisions, messengers, &c., at their personal cost. Consequently, it is no sinecure to be appointed to a prefecture or magistracy through which any main route passes, and only by squeezing the lower officials and people in their turn can such men manage to enrich themselves. But, whilst lost in contemplation of this grand barge in which a viceroy travels to his destination, we have almost missed a fleet little craft which shoots past the huge fabric like an arrow. See how curiously it is propelled—only one man sits in the stern, and yet a paddle is worked vigorously on one side, a long oar on the other; an umbrella shelters the man's head, and he is busy eating his midday meal, taking whiffs from a long pipe between the mouthfuls. It is a "foot-boat," and is the despatch-boat of the Grand Canal districts, able to accomplish—including stoppages—120 to 150 miles in the twenty-four hours. But one man does the whole work, and he rows with his feet whilst he paddles with his hands, and notwithstanding this pre-occupation of his members, he manages to attend to all his other wants simultaneously. The boat is canoe-shaped, and the sole occupant (for it only holds one) lies down at full length in the centre, with a weather-proof mat roof covering him, enclosed for all the world like a chrysalis in its cocoon. When the passenger is not asleep, or needs fresh air, the roof slides fore and aft, and he can sit up; but any attempt to stand might lose him his equilibrium.

Another common mode of conveyance is the sedan-chair, but it is only resorted to when water communication is wanting or a hilly country has to be traversed. In the case of officials the vehicle is comfortable enough, for it is large and roomy, is provided with glass windows, deep screen in front, and sunshades before and behind, and is borne on slings which divide the weight amongst four bearers. The two-bearer chair, however, is odious enough, and only a Chinaman can tolerate its inconveniences and discomfort. There is a mountain-chair used in many parts, which consists of a seat slung between two poles, with a fixed backboard to lean against behind, and a plank hanging in front for the feet, and which is far preferable to the two-bearer chair. Foreigners like it so much that they have utilised it in Hongkong in an improved shape, and for mounting hills, or even a journey on the level where great speed is no object, nothing can be more handy and comfortable. It is worthy of mention that a first-class sedan-chair is always furnished with a mirror so hung in front over the door as to be easily used by the occupant, a mariner's compass set into the cross-bar on which the sitter rests his elbows, a small vase on one side for flowers, and a receptacle in the other for expectoration when necessary. A mandarin or Chinese gentleman would be quite unhappy if, on getting into his chair, all or any of these accessories were found to be wanting. In the north of China a mule-litter is often used in the shape of a sedan-chair mounted on poles

which are yoked on to a mule before and behind. This conveyance may be a tolerable one when the road is smooth and the animals practised as regards gait and conduct; but on a hill track, and with unruly or ill-driven beasts to boot, the torture—not to say risk—of such a vehicle must render it a most objectionable means of conveyance.

The Post-office is a very ancient institution in China. Marco Polo, in his graphic and marvellously veracious account of the kingdom of the Great Kaan, spoke in terms of rapturous wonderment of the high state of efficiency in which the system of *yamb*—or postal stations—was kept up in his day. According to him government buildings of a pretentious style of architecture, and well furnished within, were placed at every twenty-five miles upon all the main thoroughfares throughout the empire, and 200 to 400 horses maintained at each station for the special purpose of conveying despatches to and fro. Between these post-houses, moreover, little forts were located at intervals of three miles, in which dwelt men-runners who supplemented the horse-service, and, it is presumed, perfected the ramifications of the system. It is curious to read of the state of advancement thus attained by a (to us still uncivilized) nation in the disposition of an important department of the body politic fully six centuries ago, and to contemplate at the same time the almost primitive condition of backwardness in which postal arrangements were allowed to remain in our own country until two or three centuries later on. The first recorded employment of post-horses in England was by Edward IV., who, when engaged in war with Scotland, ordered posts to be established at intervals of twenty miles, with relays by which his couriers were enabled to travel at the rate of seventy miles a day. This arrangement, however, was dropped with the cessation of hostilities, and it was not until Henry VIII. came to the throne that the permanent government post was organized, which has since developed by more or less rapid stages into the elaborate and marvellous institution of which the country now may so well be proud. Whilst England has thus been studiously progressive in her treatment of the matter, China, with that fatality which has always carried her up to a certain degree of perfection in most things and there left her, has not only failed to make any advance, but has actually gone back, and is at this moment behind what she was 600 years ago as regards postal facilities. One may look in vain nowadays for the handsome stations, sumptuously furnished and excellently horsed, which so excited the astonishment of the mediæval traveller. Relics, however, of the once well-ordered system remain in the shape of couriers, who convey despatches at the rate of from 180 to 200 miles a day, the mandarins of the several districts being held responsible to horse and hurry them on. These men are employed solely in the duty of carrying government communications, the correspondence of the public being left to shift wholly for itself so far as the government is concerned. And herein is suggested another curious comparison between the histories of the English and the Chinese postal systems.

The expensive and complete machinery described by Marco Polo does not seem to have provided for the conveyance of letters for the general public 600 years ago any more than the feeble relic of the institution does at this moment; whereas in England one of the first steps towards the maturity of the scheme of postal agency was that of utilising the correspondence of the public towards recouping the State for the expenses incurred in support of the establishment. So far back as the reign of Charles I. an enterprising postmaster proposed to the King the plan of carrying private letters at a small charge, which resulted in the farming of the posts to private individuals; and this being found handsomely remunerative, the State eventually took the matter into its own hands in the year 1685. This amalgamation of public and private interests for the benefit of both never seems to have occurred to the astute Chinese; and, as has been remarked, the government still monopolises the time and labour of its couriers, and bears the whole cost of maintaining them. The public are nevertheless not left unprovided for, and they possess a system of letter-carrying by private agencies which certainly performs the work with greater speed, safety, and efficiency than was ever secured in our own country up to 1784, when a mail-coach for the first time started with a postboy as part of its freight. Each city has a certain number of licensed companies who make a business of receiving and sending letters and small parcels at charges depending upon weight and distance, but always most moderate; and the companies of the several cities being in partnership or in confidential relations one with the other, a network of communication of a most efficient character, considering its materials, is kept up from one end of China to the other. So much reliance is placed by the public upon the safety and certainty of these conveyance companies, that large sums of money in paper, and smaller amounts in cash, are fearlessly consigned to their charge, and instances are rare of the trust being betrayed. Speed, of course, is less of a consideration than safety, owing to the defective means of communication at present existing; but the carriers employed by the companies travel at the fastest rate possible under the circumstances, and cover much more ground in the time than was the habit with English postboys previous to the mail-coach days, who never exceeded, even on horseback, their three-and-a-half miles per hour. Robberies of the bags must at times occur, but the public are at any rate safe from the risk to their letters which our ancestors so frequently incurred through the loitering and drunkenness peculiar to the English postboy tribe. The practice of using carrier-pigeons for express intelligence is common throughout China, and is largely resorted to by merchants and traders for business purposes. They are usually provided with one or more whistles, often of elaborate make and finish, to protect them from the ravages of hawks, &c., *en route*.

The day cannot be distant when the Chinese must open their eyes to the necessity of an improvement even upon the system with which they

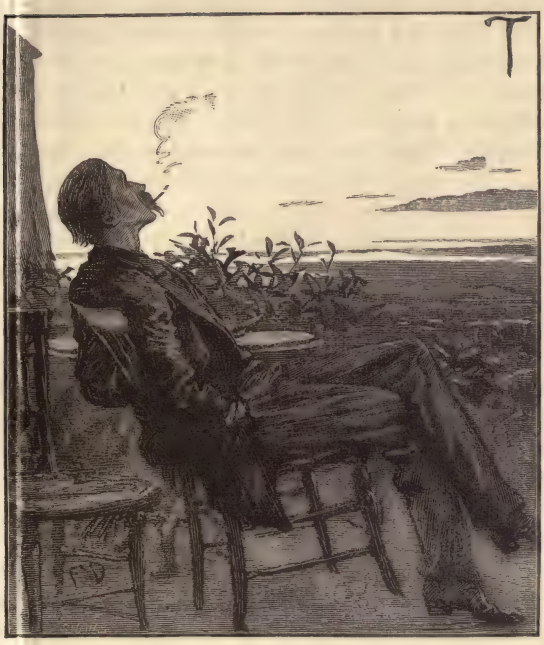
are at present so well satisfied. It affords at any rate a basis upon which development to any extent may easily be introduced under the supervision of any foreigners whom the Chinese government may enlist into their service with a view to improvement; for without adventitious aid and example it is useless for China to attempt any measure in the way of progress, however she may dispense with such support afterwards. Let her take example in this respect from Japan, a country furnished very much like herself in respect to postal arrangements when lately opened to foreign relations, and yet which—after only six years' adoption of the foreign system of postal agency—is able to publish a report by its Postmaster-General showing the following wonderful and creditable statistics of correspondence, which we copy from the *Pall Mall Gazette*: "During the fiscal year ended the 30th day of the sixth month of the tenth year of Meiji (June 30, 1877) there went through the post-office 22,053,430 ordinary letters, 606,354 registered letters, 6,764,272 postal cards, 7,372,536 (Japanese) newspapers—an increase of 2,323,141 from the year before—322,642 books, patterns, &c., and 856,637 free communications. Of the letters 105,188 contained money. The department of undelivered correspondence had to puzzle over 43,942 incorrectly or illegibly directed letters, of which 6,124 were given up as a bad job and sent to the Dead Letter Office. During the year 489 letters and packages were lost by theft or highway robbery, of which 424 were subsequently recovered and delivered intact, and 102 letters were destroyed by fire or shipwreck. The family of a carrier who lost his life in defending his mail-bag against robbers has been pensioned, and rewards have been given to eleven persons for aiding to save the mails in cases of robbery, inundation, and shipwreck. Seven new money-order offices were established during the year, and 72 new post-office savings-banks, making the total number of the former 317, and of the latter 161."

He was staring at her as if she had been a ghost.

Within the Precincts.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Signor's Household.



THE Despard family became a great centre of interest to many people both within and without the Abbey precincts at this period of their history. Without any doing, so to speak, of theirs, Fate mixed them up both with the great and the small, so that their proceedings moved a great many circles of thought and feeling beyond that in which they themselves stood. We have said without any doing of theirs—but this, perhaps, is true only in respect to Lottie, who took no steps consciously to produce the *rapprochement* which had taken place so strangely between the heaven of the Deanery and the earth of the Lodges. She had not done anything to recommend herself to Lady Caroline or Lady Caroline's nephew. And yet with both she had become an important "factor," to use a fashionable term, in the immediate concerns of life. The Captain was not so innocent of purpose in the commotion he had begun to make. But still he had not calculated upon the interest that would be excited by his proceedings. The community at St. Michael's was quiet and had little to rouse its interest. Sometimes a Canon would be translated to a higher and a better stall—sometimes an old Chevalier would die

and be replaced by another veteran not much less old than he—sometimes a son would "go wrong" and create a great deal of whispered communication and shaking of heads. At the present time there were no daughters to marry except Lottie, so that the pleasanter strain of possibility was little thought of. All this made it very inspiring, very agitating to the dwellers round the Abbey, when a family within the precincts gave them so much to think about. A girl likely to make a very good match in a romantic way: a man likely to make a very bad one, in a way which might have been quite as romantic had it not been on the wrong side, such as would debase, not exalt his class; these two probabilities coming together had a great effect upon the popular mind. In the Chevaliers' Lodges there was very little else talked about. Captain Temple, the most respected of all the Chevaliers, could not keep still, so excited was he. He had spoken to "the father," he told his wife, to put him on his guard, and to show him how necessary it was to take proper care of his child. That was all he could do: but he could not content himself with thus doing what he could. He paced about his little sitting-room, disturbing Mrs. Temple at her wool-work. She was not like her husband. She was a still, composed, almost stern woman, with a passionate heart, to which she gave very little expression. She could not talk of her daughter as Captain Temple could. The remembrance of the years during which her child was separated from her was terrible to her. When her husband talked as he was accustomed to do of this great grief of theirs, she never stopped him, but she herself was dumb. She closed all her windows, as it were, and retired into a fortress of silent anguish, out of which no cry came; but she listened to him all the same. This was what she did now, though it pained her to hear of this other girl who stood between life and death, between good and evil, as once her child had stood. She would have helped Lottie with all her heart, but she could not bear to hear her talked of—though this was precisely what she had to bear.

"I told him it was his duty to look after his daughter," said Captain Temple, pacing—three steps one way, four the other—about the room. "But he won't—you will see he won't. A beautiful girl, far too good for him, a girl who deserves a better fate. She puts me in mind of our own dear girl, Lucy. I have told you so before."

To this Mrs. Temple made no reply. He had told her so a great many times before. She selected a new shade of her Berlin wool, and set her elbow rigidly against the arm of her chair, that she might thread her needle without trembling, but she made no reply.

"She puts me constantly in mind of her. The way she holds her head, and her walk, and—— I beg your pardon, my dear. I know you don't like this kind of talk; but if you knew how I seem to see her wherever I go—wherever I go! I wonder if she is permitted to come and walk by her old father's side, God bless her. Ah! well, it was Despard's daughter we were talking of. To think *he* should have this

girl who takes no care of her—and we to whom ours was everything!"

The poor woman made a spasmodic movement, and turned her eyes upon him dumbly. She could not bear it. The needle fell out of her hands, and she stooped to hunt for it on the carpet. She would not stop him to whom it was so great a relief to talk; but it was death to her.

"But I told him," said Captain Temple. "I showed him his duty, Lucy. I told him he ought to be thankful he had such a daughter to watch over. And what more could I do? I set the whole thing before him. There was nothing more that I could do?"

"Then you must be satisfied, William, and perhaps it will have some effect; we must wait and see," said Mrs. Temple, coming to the surface again with her needle, which she had found, in her hand. She managed to get it threaded this time with great exertion, while her husband set off again upon his restricted promenade, shaking his white head. Captain Temple, it may be recollected, had not said so much to Captain Despard as he thought he had said—but if he had said everything that man could say it is not probable that it would have made much difference. The kind old Chevalier shook his white head. His eyes were full of moisture and his heart of tenderness. He did not feel willing to wait and see, as his wife suggested. He wanted to do something there and then for Lottie, to go to her and warn her, to keep watch at her door, and prevent the entrance of the wolf—anything, he did not mind what it was so long as he could secure her safety.

The other subject was discussed that same evening in another and very different scene, when Mrs. Purcell, the Signor's housekeeper, asked her old fellow-servant, Pickering, what news there was in the precincts, and if anything was stirring. It was the most delicious moment for a gossip, when tea was over in the kitchen, and dinner upstairs, and twilight was beginning to drop over the country, bringing quiet and coolness after the blaze of the day. Mrs. Purcell sat by the open window, which was cut in the very boundary wall of the Abbey precincts, as in the side of a precipice. It was not safe for any one of uncertain nerves to look straight down upon the slope of St. Michael's Hill, on which the walls were founded, and on the steep street winding below. But Mrs. Purcell had her nerves in the most steady and well-regulated condition. She was not afraid to sit at the head of the precipice, and even to look out and look down when the shop windows began to be lighted. She liked to see the lights coming out below. It was cheerful and felt like "company" when she sat alone. Old Pickering had just come in after an errand into the town. He was the man-servant while she was the housekeeper, but the work of the establishment was chiefly done by a sturdy young woman who was under the orders of both.

"News—I don't know much about news," said old Pick. "It wants young folks to make news; and there ain't many of that sort about here."

"Dear!" said Mrs. Purcell (but it must not be supposed that this exclamation meant any special expression of affection to old Pickering). "There's heaps of young folks! There's the Signor, and there's my John——"

"Master? you may call him young, if it don't go again your conscience—my notion is as he never was no younger than he is now. So you may put what name to it you please. But you don't ask me for news of master, nor Mr. John neither—Him, oh ah, there'll be news of him one of these days. He'll get a cathedral, or he'll be had up to London. We'll see him, with his baton in his hand, afore the biggest chorus as can be got together; and won't he lead 'em grand!" said old Pick. "When he was but a little thing in his white surplice I seen it in his eye."

"You were always one that did my John justice," said the housekeeper, warmly. "Just to think of it, Pick—one day a bit of a mite in his surplice, and the next, as you may say, with his baton, leading the chief in the land! We bring children into the world, but we can't tell what's to come of them," she added, with pious melancholy. "Them as is fortunate shouldn't be proud. The young men as I've seen go to the bad since I've been here!"

"That should be a real comfort to you," said Pickering, and they paused both, to take full advantage of this consolation. Then, drawing a long breath, Mrs. Purcell resumed——

"And so it should, Pick—when I see my boy that respectable, and as good as any gentleman's son, and reflect on what I've seen! But pride's not for the like of us—seeing the Lord can bring us low as fast as He's set us up." The good woman dropped her voice, with that curious dread lest envious fate should take her satisfaction amiss, which seems inherent in humanity. As for old Pick, sentiment was not in his way. He took up a little old-fashioned silver salver which stood on the table with some notes upon it, waiting the sound of the Signor's bell, and began to polish it with his handkerchief. "Them girls," he said, "there's no trust to be put in them. The times I've told her to be careful with my plate. She says she haven't the time, but you and me knows better than that. What is there to do in this house? We give's no trouble, and as for master, he's dining out half his time."

"She'll find the difference," said Mrs. Purcell, "when she's under a lady. There's many a thing I does myself. Instead of calling Maryanne till I'm hoarse, I takes and does it myself; but a lady will never do that. Ah, Pick, it's experience as teaches. They don't put any faith in what we tell them; and her head full of soldiers, and I don't know what—as if a soldier ever brought anything but harm to a servant girl."

"They are all alike," said old Pick. "There's them Despards in the Lodges—all the Abbey's talking of them. The Captain—you know the Captain? the one as sings out as if it all belonged to him—though he's

neither tenor, nor alto, nor bass, but a kind of a jumble, and as often as not sings the air!" said the old chorister, with contempt which was beyond words. Mrs. Purcell looked upon the Captain from another point of view.

"He's a fine handsome man," she said. "He looks like a lord when he comes marching up the aisle, not an old Methusaleh, like most of 'em."

"Ah!" cried Pickering, with a groan, "that's the way the women are led away. He's a fine fellow, he is! oh yes, he's like a lord, with bills in every shop in the town, and not a penny to pay 'em."

"Them shops!" said Mrs. Purcell. "I don't wonder, if a gentleman's of a yielding disposition. They offer you this, and they offer you that, and won't take an answer. It's their own fault. They didn't ought to put their temptations in folk's way. It's like dodging a bait about a poor fish's nose; and then swearing it'll make up lovely, and be far more becoming than what you've got on. I think it's scandalous for my part. They deserve to lose their money now and again."

"They say he's going to be married," said old Pick stolidly.

"Married! You're dreaming, Pick! Lord bless us," said Mrs. Purcell, "that's news, that is! Married? I don't believe a word of it; at his age!"

"You said just now he wasn't a Methusaleh, and no more he is; he's a fine handsome man. He thinks a deal of himself, and that's what makes other folks think a deal of him. The women's as bad as the shops," said old Pick, "they bring it on themselves. Here's a man as is never out of mischief. I've seen him regularly coming home—well—none the better for his liquor; and gamblin' day and night, playing billiards, betting, I don't know what. We all know what that comes to; and a grown-up family besides——"

"Dear!" said Mrs. Purcell, in great concern. She knew a good deal about Miss Despard, and her feelings were very mingled in respect to her. In the first place, to know that her John was in love with *a lady* flattered and excited her, and had made her very curious about Lottie, every detail of whose looks, and appearance generally, she had studied. A Chevalier's daughter might not be any very great thing; but it was a wonderful rise in the world for Mrs. Purcell's son to be able to permit himself to fall in love with such a person. On the other hand, Miss Despard was poor, and might interfere with John's chance of rising in the world. But anyhow, everything about her was deeply interesting to John's mother. She paused to think what effect such a change would have upon her son before she asked any further questions. What would Miss Despard do? It was not likely she would care for a stepmother after being used to be mistress of the house—would she be ready to accept anyone that asked her, in order to get "a home of her own?" And would John insist upon marrying her? and would he be able to keep a wife? These questions all hurried through Mrs. Purcell's mind on receipt of this

startling news. "Dear! dear!" she said—and for a long time it was all she could say. The interests were so mixed that she did not know what to desire. Now or never, perhaps, was the time for John to secure the wife he wanted; but even in that case, would it be right for him to marry? Mrs. Purcell did not know what to think. "Did you hear who the lady was?" she asked, in a faint voice.

"Lady?—no lady at all—a girl that works for her living. I know her well enough by sight. One of the dressmaker's girls in the River Lane. Ladies is silly enough, but not so silly as that; though I don't know neither," said old Pick, "what women-folks will do for a husband is wonderful. They'll face the world for a husband. It don't matter what sort he is, nor if he's worth having——"

"They haven't took that trouble for you, anyhow," said Mrs. Purcell faintly, standing up amid her preoccupations for her own side.

"I've never given 'em the chance," said Pick, with a chuckle. "Lord bless you! they've tried a plenty, but I've never given 'em the chance. Many's the story I could tell you. They've done their best, poor things. Some has been that enterprising, I never could keep in the same room with 'em. But I've kep single, and I'll keep single till my dying day. So will master, if I can judge. There's some has the way of it, and some hasn't. It would be a clever one," said old Pickering, caressing his chin with an astute smile, "to get the better of me."

The housekeeper threw at him a glance of mingled indignation and derision. She gave her head a toss. It was not possible for feminine flesh and blood to hear this unmoved. "You're so tempting," she said, with angry energy. "'Andsome and well to do, and worth a woman's while."

"Bless you, they don't stick at that," said the old man, with a grin. "I could tell you of things as has happened—some to myself—some to other folks——"

"Dear!" cried Mrs. Purcell, "and me to think you were an old stick of an old bachelor, because nobody would have you, Pick! There's some, as a body reads it in their face—as dry as an east wind, and cutting like an east wind does, that is never happy but when it's blighting up something. I daresay it's all a story about Captain Despard—just like the rest."

"None of 'em likes it, when you speak free," said old Pick, chuckling to himself. "Some pretends, just to please a man; but women does hang together, whoever says different, and they none of them likes to hear the truth. About Captain Despard, it's a story if you please, but it's true. The girl she makes no secret, she tells everybody as she'll soon make a difference in the house. She'll pack off the son to do for himself, and the daughter——"

"What of the daughter, Pick? Oh, the shameless hussy, to talk like that of a poor motherless young girl——"

"If she wasn't motherless, what would Polly have to do with her? It can't be expected as a second wife should cry her eyes out because the first's gone."

"Polly!" said Mrs. Purcell, with bated breath; "and she says she'll pack the son about his business; and the daughter?—What is she going to do about the daughter, when she's got the poor misfortunate man under her thumb? And who's Polly, that you know so much about her? She's a pretty kind of acquaintance, so far as I can see, for a man as considers himself respectable, and comes out of a gentleman's house."

"That's the other side," said Pick, still chuckling to himself. "I said women hangs together. So they do, till you come to speak of one in particular, and then they fly at her. I don't know nothing against Polly. If the Captain's in love with her, it ain't her fault; if she wants to better herself, it's no more than you or me would do in her place. She's as respectable as most of the folks I know. To work for your living ain't a disgrace."

"It's no disgrace; but a stepmother that is a dressmaker girl will be something new to Miss Despard. Oh, I can't smile! A dressmaker as —— And young, I suppose, like herself? Oh, trust a man for that! she's sure to be young. Poor thing, poor thing! I'm that sorry for her, I can't tell what to do. A lady, Pick; they may be poor, but I've always heard there was no better gentlefolks anywhere to be found. And a woman that the likes of you calls Polly. Oh, that's enough, that's enough for me! A nice, good, respectable girl, that knows what's her due—you don't call *her* Polly. Polly—there's a deal in a name."

"Aha!" said old Pick, rubbing his hands, "I knew as soon as I named one in particular what you would say. Fly at her, that's what all you women do. A name is neither here nor there. I've known as good women called Polly as was ever christened Mary; eh? ain't they the same name? I had a sister Polly; I had a ——"

"Dear, dear!" said Mrs. Purcell, softly. She was paying no attention to him; her mind was much disturbed. She turned away instinctively from the gathering gloom of evening in which her old companion stood, and cast her anxious eyes upon the wide landscape outside—the sky between grey and blue, the lights beginning to twinkle far down in the steep street. There was something in the great space and opening which seemed to give counsel and support in her perturbation. For she did not know what to do for the best. At such a moment would not John have a better chance than he might ever have? And yet, if he got his heart's desire, was it quite certain that it would be good for John? The Signor's housekeeper was just as anxious about her boy as if she had been a great lady. Twinges of maternal jealousy, no doubt, went through her mind. If John married, he would be separated from his mother, and his wife would look down upon her and teach him to despise her—a mother who was in service. What could she expect if her son married a

lady? All these thoughts went through her mind as she looked out with anxiety, which drew deep lines upon her forehead. But, on the whole, she was not selfish, and considered it all anxiously, ready to make any sacrifice for that which in the long run would be most good for John.

In the meantime old Pickering talked on. When he was set agoing it was difficult to bring him to a stop. He was quite aware that at the present moment he ought not to stay there talking; he knew he ought to be lighting the lamps, and kept listening with expectant ear for a sharp tinkle of the Signor's bell, which should warn him of his retarded duties. But for all that he talked on. Dinner was over for some time, and Pick knew very well that he ought to carry in the notes which he had piled again upon the salver after giving it that polish with his handkerchief. However, though he knew his duty, he took no step towards performing it, but moved leisurely about, and put various articles back into the old polished cupboard with glass doors, which showed all the best china, and was the pride of Mrs. Purcell's heart. When Maryanne came in, he emptied the salver again and showed her how imperfectly she had cleaned it. "I can't think how folks can be so stupid," Pickering said. How do you think you are ever to better yourself if you don't take a lesson when it's giv' you? and proud you should be that anyone would take the trouble. If I see it like this again I'll — I don't know what I shan't do." He knew very well that it was what ought to have been his own work that he was thus criticising, and, as it happened, so did Maryanne, whose spirit was working up to a determination not to be longer put upon. But for all that he found fault, (always waiting to hear the bell ring sharply, with a quaver of impatience in it,) and she submitted, though she was aware that she was being put upon. Mrs. Purcell, in the window, paid no attention to them. She kept gazing out upon the wide world of grey-blue clouds, and asking herself what would be best for John.

They were disturbed in all these occupations by a step which came briskly downstairs, perhaps betokening, Pickering thought, that the Signor was going out again, and that his own delay about the lamps had been a wise instinct. But, after all, it was not the Signor's step; it was young Purcell, who came along the little winding passage full of corners, and entered the housekeeper's room, scattering the little party assembled there. Maryanne fled as a visitor from the outer world flies from the chamber of a servant of the court, at the advent of the queen. Though she would assure herself sometimes that Mr. Purcell's son was "no better nor me," yet in his presence Maryanne recognised the difference. He was "the young master" even in Pick's eyes, who stopped talking, and put the notes back once more upon the salver with a great air of business, as if in the act of hastening with them to the Signor. Mrs. Purcell was the only one who received her son with tranquillity. She turned her eyes upon him quietly, with a smile, with a serene pride

which would not have misbecome an empress. No one in the house, not the Signor himself, had ascended to such a height of being as the housekeeper; no one else had produced such a son.

"Go and light the candles in the study, Pick," said young Purcell. "The Signor is in the dark, and he's composing. Quick and carry him the lights. Don't bother him with those letters now. He is doing something beautiful," he said, turning to his mother. "There's a phrase in it I never heard equalled. He has been sitting out on the terrace getting inspiration. I must run back and keep old Pick from disturbing him, making a noise ——"

"Stay a moment, Johnny, my own dear ——"

"What's the matter, mother? Oh, I know; you've heard of this last offer. But if I take any I'll take St. Ermengilde's, where I could still go on living at home, the Signor says. It's less money, but so long as I can help him and see *her* now and again, and please you ——"

"Ah, John, your mother's last; but that's natural," said Mrs. Purcell, shaking her head, "quite natural. I don't complain. Is it another organ you've got the offer of? Well, to be sure! and there are folks that say merit isn't done justice to! John, I've been hearing something," said the housekeeper, putting out her hand to draw him to her; "something as perhaps you ought to know."

The young man looked at her eagerly. In this place he bore a very different aspect from that under which he had appeared to Lottie. Here it was he who was master of the situation, the centre of a great many hopes and wishes. He looked at her closely in the dusk, which made it hard to see what was in her face. He was a good son, but he was his mother's social superior, and there was a touch of authority, even in the kindness of his voice.

"Something I ought to know? I know it already: that Mr. Ridsdale has been visiting at the Lodges. That is nothing so extraordinary. If you think a little attention from a fashionable fop will outweigh the devotion of years!" said the young man, with a flush of high-flown feeling. He had a great deal of sentiment and not very much education, and naturally he was high-flown. "People may say what they like," he went on in an agitated voice, "but merit does carry the day. They've offered me St. Ermengilde over the heads of half a dozen. Is it possible, can you suppose, that she should be so blind!"

"That wasn't it," said Mrs. Purcell quietly; "it's something quite different, my dear. Shut the door, that we mayn't have old Pick coming in again (it was he that told me), and you shall hear."

CHAPTER XVII.

The Musician at Home.

The Signor's house was one of those which, when general peacefulness had made the battlements round St. Michael's unnecessary, had grown within the outer wall. It was more like a growth than a building. Windows which looked, as we have said, as if cut in the side of a precipice, gave light to the small panelled chambers which were connected by bits of quaint passages, here and there by a little flight of stairs, with tiny vestibules and landing-places, wasting the little space there was. Room after room had no doubt been added as necessity arose, and each new room had to be connected somehow with the others. The house occupied more space than a comfortable ugly modern house with tolerably sized rooms would have done, and when the Signor came into possession it had been a miracle of picturesque awkwardness, not a room in it capable of holding more than three or four people at a time, yet as many rooms as would have lodged a dozen—the least possible use for the greatest possible expenditure of space. The Signor, however, had built on the inner side a dining-room in red brick, which made existence possible, though it failed in the point of beauty. To tell the truth, the musician's dining-room was an eyesore to all the antiquaries and all the critics. Nobody knew by what neglect of the architect, by what partiality of the Board of Works, it had been permitted to be built. It was of no style at all, neither Gothic, like the original building, nor Queen Anne, like the fashion. He had failed in his duty in every respect. It was a square box with a large window filling up one side. It was lighted with gas. It had red curtains in bold and uncompromising rep, and a large mahogany sideboard of the worst period. How he had been allowed to build this monstrosity nobody knew. It had been made the subject of a painful discussion in the Chapter itself, where Canon Skeffington (the Honble. and Revd.) complained so bitterly of the injury done to his best principles and highest feelings, that the Dean was irritated, and took up the cudgels on his side on behalf of his favourite musician. "He has a right, I suppose, to make himself comfortable like the rest of us," the head of the community said. "No right to make my life a burden to me," said the Honourable Canon; and, he added, almost weeping, "I cannot look out of my window without seeing the thing. You talk at your ease, you others ——" But what was to be done? The Chapter could not take so bold a step as to invade the rights of private property, tear down the Signor's red curtains, burn his sideboard, destroy his walls. He had to be left to the enjoyment of his villanous erection. The Signor laughed in his sleeve, but in public was remorseful, bemoaning his own ignorance of art, and declaring that if he could afford it, rather than give pain to Canon Skeffington——but then he could not afford it—and what was to be done? He kept his dining-room, which was big enough to accommodate his

friends, but for himself the Signor had better taste than he professed to have. His favourite sitting-room was in the same position and had the same view as that of his housekeeper, but its window was between two buttresses of the wall, which held in their gigantic arms a little square shelf of green turf, a small projection of the hill, which above and below was covered with masonry, leaving this little ledge of grass, like one of the hanging gardens of Scripture, hung high in the air above the town and the landscape. The Signor's window opened upon this little terrace. His room within was low and dark, but in summer at least this mattered little, for its dim light and shadowy walls made a pleasant shelter, like a bower in a wood, from the lightness and brightness outside. There was a heavy beam across the roof, from which hung a little chandelier of old Venice glass, reflected in a tall old mirror among the oak panels over the mantlepiece, and not much more bright than they were. On one side were the carved doors of a cupboard in the wall, which was full of old music, the Signor's chief treasures, and on the other was a range of low bookshelves, also filled with music books of every size and kind. The piano stood in the corner near the window, with the keyboard close to the light. There were a few chairs about the room, and a writing-table piled with papers. This was all the furniture of the dim little chamber, and it was impossible to imagine a greater contrast than existed between it and the new building which had so shocked Canon Skeffington. And the Signor was not in this particular much unlike his house. A touch of sentiment, which some people were disposed to call high-flown, mingled in him with a curious undercurrent of cynicism, which few people suspected at all. He liked to jar upon the Canon Skeffingtons of existence and ruffle their tempers and their finest feelings. But in his heart he had feelings equally fine, and was as easily *froissé* as they. He mocked at them on the very points in which he himself was weak, affecting an insensibility which he did not feel, building the vile modern room with profound enjoyment of their delicate distress, but retiring out of it himself to the shelter of this dim romantic chamber. The combination was very like the Signor.

On this particular evening, when young Purcell went to call for lights, the Signor was seated out on his little terrace enjoying the twilight and a cigarette together. There were two chairs on the scrap of grass, and a little table with an inkstand upon it, and the cup in which the Signor had taken his black coffee after dinner. He was leaning back in his chair puffing out the fragrant smoke from his cigarette, lazily watching it as it floated upwards, and now and then noting down a bar or two of music upon a piece of paper in his hand. Sometimes he took the cigarette from his mouth and hummed a scrap of an air, keeping time with his head and hand. There was no one who was more popular in the country as a composer of graceful drawing-room songs than Signor Rossinetti. It was something refined, something elegant that was expected from him, delicate soprano melodies, fine com-

binations for tenors and altos. It was very seldom that he took any trouble about the bass, but his tenor songs were justly considered exquisite. He liked to have a pretty set of verses on hand, and "set" them in the intervals of more serious business. The summer evening, when he sat out after dinner upon his scrap of terrace, was the time when he had most inspiration. His pupil and protégé, young Purcell, thought there was no intellectual pleasure higher and more elevating, than to sit out here in the shadow of the great grey buttresses, with the cheerful distant noises of the High Street floating upward from the foot of the wall, and to watch the Signor composing his song. The young fellow would run in to the piano and "try over" every line of the symphony as it came welling out from that fount of music. He said often that, except one thing, there was no such delight in the world. To see genius working under his very eyes, what a privilege it was! To Purcell it seemed that his master read his heart, and uttered his deepest sentiments for him in those compositions. To-night his mind had been lulled out of great commotion and disturbance by the rosy vision of love and happiness that had breathed through the notes. It was glad, it was sad, it was full of suggestion, it wrung the very heart of Purcell—"'Twas in the time of roses, they plucked them as they passed." Would that time ever come for him? He thought the Signor had read the depths of his heart, the wistful longing which was sometimes hope and sometimes despair, the pictures he made to himself of one day wandering by *her* side, one day gathering roses for her. He murmured over and over the tune of the refrain in a kind of ecstasy as he went to his mother's room, his fancy excited, his head all on fire, half with the delicious sense of being friend to such a genius, and sharing as it were the very inspiration that produced such beautiful things—and half with the pride and delight of being so deeply in love and hanging on so exquisite an edge of anguish. The Signor himself did not know how much those pretty compositions of his went to his pupil's heart; but he was flattered, as who would not be? by this never-failing appreciation of his work, and youthful enthusiasm. It pleased him vaguely, just as the floating sounds from below, the voices and noises, all softened by the warm air of the summer evening, and even by the dimness of the twilight, pleased him. How harmonious they became as they soared upwards, all that was harsh taken out of them, filling the solitude with a genial sense of human fellowship! Perhaps the Signor was, like many others, not too fond of his fellow-creatures close at hand; but as they went and came, far down at his feet, talking, calling to each other, shouting their wares, singing now and then, making a sound of their steps upon the pavement, and a movement of their breathing in the air, he was transported with the hum, and felt that he loved them. This always gave him inspiration, this and the glimmer of the river and of the distant villages scattered over the plain, throwing up here and there a dim point of a spire among the trees. When Purcell left him, he put aside the bit of music-paper on which he had been

jotting down his chords. He raised his eyes to the profound unfathomable blue above, and swung back upon his chair. He was half giddy with the sense of circling depths of infinity above him, though himself raised so high. The Signor was not without a feeling that he was raised very high, not only in locality, but in soul; yet there was a heaven above which made his head giddy when he looked up—a heaven full of stars, from Palestrina to Mendelssohn, all shining over him, serene, unapproachable, not even holding out any encouragement to him, passive and splendid as the other stars which hid themselves in that still-luminous blue. Would any one ever look up at that sky and recall his name as also among the ranks of the unapproachable? The Signor turned his eyes from it with a sigh as he heard some one enter the room, and came down to earth, letting his chair drop upon its four legs, and his mind return to the present. He watched through the open window the advent of old Pickering carrying the lamp. The old man put it down on the table, and lighted some candles on the mantelpiece in front of the dim mirror, which gave them back with a blurred, enlarged reflection. His master sat outside and watched him pottering about the room, setting the chairs against the wall, and vainly attempting to make everything "straight." It was a standing grievance to old Pick that he was not allowed to close the window and draw the curtains as it was right to do. The Signor outside sat and watched him with a gentle amusement. He liked to feel the oddness and superiority of his own tastes, thrown into evidence by the mighty anxiety of old Pick to shut the window. A smile came over his face. To ordinary mortals, in ordinary houses, it was not necessary to seek inspiration from the skies and the wide world of evening air. As Pick approached the window, with his usual look of wistful anxiety to be allowed to do what was right, and tacit disapproval of lawless habits, the Signor stepped through smiling. "I think you will shut me out some night, Pick," he said, "and then you will have my blood on your soul—for what could I do upon the terrace? I should fall asleep and tumble over, and be picked up in little pieces at the foot of the hill."

"Ah! I don't feel no fear of that, sir," said Pickering, shaking his head; "you've got too good a voice for that, sir. I don't make no doubt that you could hold an A sharp till you frighted the whole Abbey. And besides I always looks out; I've got the habit in this house. Even the girl, she'll go and stand at the window, as if the view was any matter to her; it's a thing as carries one away. But I don't hold with leaving all open when the lights are lighted. Bless you, the top windows in the street with a spyglass, or even with good eyes like what I had when I was young, they could see in."

"Much good it would do them," said the Signor, sitting down before his piano. And indeed it is quite true that as he sat close to the window, relieved against the light of the lamp within, there were eyes at the top windows opposite which could catch with difficulty the

outline of the Signor's pale profile and black moustache. Some of the young ladies in the shops would climb up occasionally and show that exciting prospect to a friend. But it was an amusement which palled after the first moment, and certainly did no harm to the Signor.

"Maybe not much good, sir," said old Pick, who always would have the last word; "but it might do harm. You never can tell what folks will say. The less they know the more they'll talk; and that's true all the world over; though I will say for the Abbey as it's as bad or worse than most other places."

"Why should it be worse, Pick?"

"I don't know, sir—unless it's the clergy and the chevaliers. You see, when gentlemen has little or nothing to do, they're brought down to the level of the women, so far as that goes—and as gentlemen always does things more thorough than the women when they're once started, the consequence nat'rally is—Leastways that's my notion of it," said Pick;—"the women havn't the strength to start a real talking as does harm. They tries hard—as hard as they knows how—but bless you, in that as in most things, they wants a man to show 'em the way."

"That is a new view, Pick. I thought if there was one thing in which the ladies had the advantage of us——"

"There ain't one thing, sir, not one. For my part, I can tell in a minute a story as will hang together, a real crusher, one as will drive folks distracted and ruin a family. You'll never get that out of a woman's tongue. Nay, nay, they hasn't the force for it; they're poor creatures at the best; they can make a person uncomfortable, but they can't do no more. And when I say the Abbey's as bad or maybe worse, I mean that the gentlemen has little to do, and they has to amuse themselves the same as the women. That's what I mean to say."

The Signor gave a half attention to Pick's long speech while he sat at his piano. All the time he was running over his new composition with one hand, correcting a note here and there, changing a harmony. "'Twas in the time of roses—the time of roses," he hummed softly under his breath. But the smile on his lip was for Pick, and he gave him a negligent half attention, amused by his chatter, and by the peculiar views he held forth. He looked up at him as Pick stopped, singing with a little flourish in the accompaniment, which meant satisfaction in having at last got the phrase to his mind—"'Twas in the time of roses—the time of roses——" Old Pick was not surprised by the utterance of a sentiment so foreign to his subject. He knew his master's ways, and he took a certain interest in his master's productions, such as old servants often benevolently accord to the doings of their "family." He could not tell what folks saw in them—still, as the Signor's productions, he looked upon them with kindly toleration all the same.

"You may say, sir," he cried, "'the time o' roses'—that's just the very thing; for, I daresay, but for that rose in his button-hole, and the

jaunty looks of him, a young girl wouldn't have seen nothing in him. But I don't know neither—women is the queerest things on the face of this whole earth. Flatter them, or make them think they're bettering themselves, and there's nothing they won't do."

"Who is it that wears flowers in his button-hole?" said the Signor. He wore them himself, and he was curious and slightly excited, wondering if any gossip could by any chance have got up about himself. The idea of such a thing kindled him into interest; his right hand dropped off from the piano, though with the other hand he kept softly sounding notes in the bass, and he turned towards his old servant with a look of animation altogether new. What interest is there like that with which one anticipates hearing something about oneself?

But at this moment Purcell's steps were heard coming quickly along the passage, and he came in with his head erect, and his eyes gleaming, and pushed old Pick out of his way. "That will do, Pick," he said, with a glimmer of impatience, "that will do! I will set things right for the master, myself."

"What is the matter, boy?"

"Matter or no matter, if you think I'll leave it to the first that comes to look after my master—" said old Pick, standing his ground. He would not yield; he was very friendly in general to Mr. John, and ready to do what he ordered, but there are limits to everything. He stood his ground steadily, arranging and re-arranging the papers on the table, while young Purcell went forward to the Signor. The young fellow put himself behind the musician, between him and the window, and stooped to whisper in his ear. His glowing eyes, his eager aspect, made a great impression on the Signor, who was very impressionable. He was possessed by some new thought. "Master," he said breathless, "I have a hundred things to say to you. I have heard something new. I want your advice, I want your help." He was breathless, as if he had been running a race, though all he had really done had been to come along a few yards of passage. The Signor was easily moved by the sight of emotion, and he was fond of his *protégé*. "Go, Pick," he said immediately, "and bring us some tea."

"Tea, sir!" said the old man in consternation. "You never takes it. If it's nothing but to get rid of old Pick, I'll go. I'll go; never fear but I'll go."

"I want some tea," said the Signor authoritatively; "foolish old man, would you spoil my new song for want of a cup of tea? Go to Mrs. Purcell, and tell her, with my compliments, I want some of her special brew—the very best, as she used to make it for me when I had headaches. Quick, my head threatens to ache now. Well! what is it, boy? Has the Queen sent for you to be the head of her orchestra, or is the Dean coming to pay us a visit. It must be something very important to judge by your face."

"Oh, sir," cried young Purcell, "what a heart you have! making up

a headache and a whole story to save old Pick's feelings—and me that am really no better than he is, pushing him out of the way!"

"Nobody is any better than any other," said the Signor in his measured tones. "I have tried to teach you so all your life. But I will allow that some are worse than others," he added, with a smile. His disciple was too much occupied, however, with the urgency of his own case to notice what he said.

"Master," said the young man, "I have hurried back to tell you I have changed my mind; I will take the organ at Sturminster after all."

An almost imperceptible change came over the Signor's face—that slight stiffening of the muscles of the mouth—continuance of the easy and genial smile of real satisfaction into the forced and uncomfortable one of pretended equanimity—which is the sign above all others of disappointment and displeasure, became visible in his face. "Well——" he said slowly; "why not—if you think it will be more to your advantage? After all, that is the grand test."

"It is not that," said young Purcell, shrinking a little; "you can't think that I would leave you only for my advantage. No, master, it is not that. You must hear it all before you judge."

"Certainly," said the Signor. He kept the same smile rigid upon his face. "And in the meantime here is old Pick with the tea," he added, "and we must drink it for the sake of his feelings. What, Pick, is it made already? I don't think your mother can be so careful as usual, boy, about her brew."

"I don't put no faith in tea that stands long to draw, sir," said Pick. "I like it myself with all the scent in it. Water as boils hard, and not a minute lost. That's my maxim. It's fresh made with plenty of tea in, and I'll warrant it good. Smell that," he said, taking off the lid of the teapot. The Signor listened to him quietly, taking no notice of Purcell's impatience. He smiled on the old man and let him talk. He was wounded and offended by his pupil's sudden change after the decision of an hour ago; and though he had a great desire to hear what reason could be given for this difference of feeling, his annoyance and disgust at the change found expression in this apparent carelessness of it. He kept Pick talking with secret malice, while Purcell fretted. The young fellow did not know how to contain himself. He collected the music-books that were on the piano, and put them back on the shelves. Then he took them down again; he shifted the candles; he roamed from corner to corner, moving the chairs about, throwing into disorder the things on the table; now and then he cast a piteous look at his master; but the Signor sat, in serene malice sounding the bass notes in his accompaniment, putting artful questions to old Pickering, and leading him on to talk. It was the old man himself at length who brought the suspense to an end by recollecting something it was necessary for him to do. "They'd have kep' me there all night," he said to Mrs. Purcell, with pretended impatience, as he got back to the housekeeper's room.

"Dear!" said Mrs. Purcell, astonished; she could not understand how the Signor could waste time talking to old Pick at a moment so momentous for her John.

When old Pickering was gone the Signor still said nothing. He turned to the piano and began to play; he was like a woman offended, who will not approach the subject on which she is dying to be informed. At last Purcell, approaching humbly with wistful eyes, ventured to put one hand lightly upon his arm.

"Master," said the young man, "let me speak to you. I cannot do anything till I have spoken to you."

"To me, boy? Speak then, as much as you please," said the Signor, nodding at him with an air of ingenuous wonder while he rang out the end of the melody. "'Twas in the time of roses," he sang; then swinging himself round on his stool, "You want to speak to me? Why didn't you say so sooner? Speak then, I am all attention," he said.

Then Purcell began, once more breathless with agitation and excitement: "I think there seems a chance for me, sir," he said; "my mother has just been telling me. It is such a chance as never may happen again. You know I love St. Michael's better than anything in the world—except one thing. Master, *she* is in trouble; her home is about to be made impossible to her; now or never; if I had a home to offer her, she might accept it. This is why I said I would take Sturminster. St. Ermengilde is more to my mind, a thousand times more to my mind; and to be near you, to have the benefit of your advice, that would be everything for me. But, dear master," said the young man, "must I not think of her first? and here is a chance for me, perhaps the only chance I may have in my life."

"Has anything happened to Miss Despard?" said the Signor in great surprise. He recognised the justice of the plea, and he listened with great interest and sympathy, and a curious feeling which was neither sympathy nor interest. Lottie was to the Signor a mysterious creature, exciting an altogether different kind of feeling from that which he felt for his pupil. He was almost sentimentally attached to his pupil, and entered into the history and prospects of his love with an enthusiasm quite unlike that with which a mature Englishman generally interests himself in anybody's love-affairs. But along with this sentiment there existed another almost directly opposite to it, an interest in Lottie as a being of a totally different class from Purcell, of whom it would be profoundly curious to know the history, and the means by which she might perhaps be brought to look favourably on—nay, to marry—Purcell; which seemed to the Signor quite "on the cards." How she might be brought to this, in what way she would reconcile herself to be Purcell's wife; how she would bow a spirit, evidently so proud, to the young musician's origin and to his ways of talking, which, though refined enough, were still at the bottom, those of a man whose mother was "in service:" all this was deeply captivating as a matter of study to the Signor; he got,

or expected to get, a great deal of amusement out of it, expecting that Lottie's struggles in fitting herself for the position would be wonderful enough: so that his interest cannot be called entirely benevolent. But between this keen and half-malign interest and the sentimental interest he took in Purcell's "happiness," it may be imagined that the crisis was nearly as exciting to him as it was to Purcell himself. He listened to the story with the warmest interest, and agreed that there was nothing for it but to accept Sturminster. "But you must not lose a day," he said; "you must secure the lady at once, there is not a moment to lose."

"Secure?" Purcell said, growing red and growing white; "then you think there is a hope, a—likelihood——"

"Think? I think there is an almost certainty!" cried the Signor. He became quite excited himself for the sake of his pupil and for his own sake, for the keen intellectual interest he felt in this curious problem as to what Lottie would do. "You must go to-morrow," he cried, with all the eagerness of a personal interest; "you must not lose a single day."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Young Purcell.

Next morning found young Purcell in a state of excitement and nervous agitation still greater than that of the previous night. He had not slept during the natural time for sleep, and in consequence, according to the fashion of youth unaccustomed to watching, had fallen very fast and heavily asleep out of sheer fatigue in the morning, waking only with an indescribable sense of guilt to hear the bells ringing for the morning service in the Abbey. Such a thing had never happened to him before, and his shame and sense of wrong-doing were more than reason. He jumped up in dismay, but even the most hurried toilette could not get him in time; and his mother appeared at his door as he prepared to rush out half-dressed, preventing his exit. "You wouldn't go out without your breakfast?" she cried with horror. The virtuous and carefully regulated life of the chorister and musical student trained under the Signor's eye and his mother's constant care, had made a late morning and an omitted breakfast seem like something criminal. Besides, a sense of the crisis had got into the air. The Signor had left an anxious message, begging his *protégé* not to hurry himself, to take his time, and to keep up his courage. His mother kissed him wistfully, and served him with a noble breakfast, as if he wanted strengthening in the most material way, for the important piece of work before him. Even old Pick looked at him with respectful curiosity as at a man on the edge of a very serious step indeed, a curiosity mingled with awe and a little grim humour and admiration. The boy was going to do what Pick had never

had the courage to do; and though the old man thought the young one a fool, and hugged himself on his superior wisdom, yet it cannot be denied that he looked with a certain respect on the bold youth who was about to make such a venture. He put his breakfast on the table, not grudging the trouble, though the Signor's breakfast had long been over, and he shook his head behind Mr. John's chair. "Take a good breakfast, it will do you a deal of good," he said, as he left the hero of the occasion. Purcell, though his mother was only the housekeeper, was the son of the house; he took his meals with the master, though it was his mother who prepared their dishes in the kitchen. It was a false position, perhaps, but he had not yet found any trouble in it. He had been a little curly-headed boy in the choir when Mrs. Purcell came first to take charge of the Signor's house; she had been the sole servant then, and had scrubbed and brushed and cooked, diligently keeping everything in order. Old Pickering had gone through the same sort of training which had made John Purcell a gentleman. He, too, had been a chorister, and had progressed into a lay-clerk, with possibilities of rising to something better. But Pick was one of the unsuccessful ones; his voice failed him, his science never had been great, and a little after Mrs. Purcell's advent he had come to the Signor also to be provided for. The organist had a large heart and a somewhat indolent temper; the easiest way to provide for the old singing-man was to take him into his own household, and this was what had been done. As for Pick, he had settled very easily into his new place, having been the son of the master of a little tavern; and though it cost him an effort to acknowledge the little soprano, whose surplice he had put on so often, in the light of a young master, yet the effort was made. Pick was conscientious, he did not do anything by halves; and the first time that the Signor's pupil was permitted to play the voluntary in the Abbey, the old man made his fellow-servants jump, and gave the youth a shock of mingled alarm and pleasure, by suddenly addressing him as Mr. John. Nobody had expected such a heroic act of submission, but Pick knew his place and all that was suitable in the circumstances. "Him as the Signor puts in his own place has a right to be respected," he said; and he never wavered in that noble self-abnegation, nor let any one suppose that it was painful to him. All this had happened long before the period of which we are writing; but what sensation, what emotion, it had caused at the time! Pick stood now, pausing behind the young musician's chair, and lifted up his hands and shook his head. To think this boy, whom he had, so to speak, brought up, should show so much courage! Pick himself had never made such a venture, nor even the Signor, who was the master of both; and yet this boy was going to do it. The old man shook his head, not knowing what might come of it; but in his heart he felt a respect reaching to admiration, for the courage which was so much beyond anything he had ever known.

Courage, however, was the last quality in which, on this particular

morning, young Purcell could be said to excel. To devote your life in secret to a beloved object; to dream of her night and day; to make impassioned resolutions, and determine to win glory and wealth for her, is not so hard for a fanciful youth; but to go into her presence, look into the face that dazzles you—confront the goddess of your distant worship, and without any preliminaries to lead up to this great step, and prepare her for it, quite off-hand and impromptu ask her to marry you! This is a very different matter. The young man sat alone and tried to eat his breakfast, trembling to think of what was before him. The circumstances were such as to add tenfold to the natural tremors of such a crisis. She was a lady, and far above him—not rich indeed, nor occupying any very exalted position in reality—but her dignity was very imposing to the young man, who had always recognised this grace of, what seemed to him rank, as one of her particular charms. Purcell was painfully aware that he himself had no right to the name of gentleman. Many a less worthy claimant has borne it, with no thought that it was inappropriate, and Purcell had anxiously and painfully endeavoured to acquire all its outside appearances. He knew, as well as any, how to behave himself in society, and passed muster very well among other young men. He was a little over-anxious, perhaps, a little too fine in his language, too deferential and polite, not sufficiently at his ease, to get much enjoyment out of his social experiences; but this was a fault on the right side. Notwithstanding his modest sense of his own 'merits' Purcell could not persuade himself that he was Lottie's equal. He knew he was not her equal. She had been as a star to him, faraway and out of reach—and though in the fervour of imaginative passion the hope of winning her had seemed like heaven, yet the actual enterprise of wooing her, when brought thus close, seemed very appalling indeed—a quest more dangerous and alarming than ever knight errant set forth upon. His knees knocked together, great beads of moisture came upon his forehead—how was he to do it? how was he to present himself, to explain the hopes which, looked at thus in cold blood, appeared even to himself impossible, not to say presumptuous in the highest degree? How was he ever, he asked himself, to make her aware what he meant? She would not understand him. She would think he meant something else, anything else—rather than that he, a poor musician, the son of the Signor's housekeeper, wanted to MARRY her, the daughter of a gentleman. It would be impossible to make her understand him. This seemed the first difficulty of all, and it was an appalling one. She would not even know what he meant. In this respect indeed Purcell was mistaken, for Lottie already knew well enough what were the hopes in his heart—resenting them highly as one of the wrongs of fate against her; but this he had no way of knowing. If he could but have got anyone to smooth the way for him, to tell what it was he wanted to say, to set him agoing, he thought he could find eloquence enough to carry him on—but how could he make that *premier pas*? Thus, while the household was all ex-

pectant, excited by what was coming, Purcell sat over his breakfast and trembled, too frightened to move or think, though with a consciousness that this desperate step must be taken. The Signor in the Abbey, rolling forth melodious thunders out of the organ, kept thinking of him with a smile, and a half sigh. Like Pick, he had a certain admiration for the valour of the boy thus pushing forward before himself into the mysteries of life; but the Signor's thoughts were more tender and less cynical than those of his servant. He could not help wondering how it was that in his own person he had let all such chances slip. How was it? As he followed his pupil in imagination to the feet of his love, that young creature seemed very fair, very much to be desired. No doubt, to have such a one by your side, sharing your life with you, would make existence bear a very different appearance. Why was it he had never done what Purcell was going to do? This question seemed to flow into the music he was playing, and to go circling round and round the Abbey in the morning sunshine. Why? Life was endurable enough, a calm sort of routine, with now and then a pleasurable sensation in it, but nothing more; and no doubt it might have been made more of. The Signor could not answer his own question. He did not want to make himself the rival of his pupil, or to do anything similar to what young Purcell was doing. He had no wish to make any violent change in life, which was well enough as it was. But only it was odd that a simple fellow like John Purcell should thus boldly have pushed before him into a completer existence—very odd; the boy was bold. Whether he succeeded or not, his very agitation and ardour had in them a higher touch of emotion than any that had been in the life of his master. He laughed within himself at the boy's temerity—but the laugh was mingled with a sigh.

And Mrs. Purcell, for her part, was in high excitement, longing for her boy to be gone on his errand, longing for him to be back again. That her John should marry a lady was the climax of grandeur and happiness. To be sure, it ought to have been a rich lady or great lady. He deserved a princess, his mother felt. Still, as things were, it was a kind of intoxication to think even of the daughter of a Chevalier. Why did he linger, as if breakfast was worth thinking of? She listened for every sound, for the door shutting, for his step in the hall, and was very cross when Maryanne made a noise, so that she could not hear what was going on upstairs. As for old Pick, he brushed Mr. John's hat with a grim smile on his face, and hung about the hall to watch him go out.

"The young un's off at last," he said, with a chuckle, marching into the kitchen: when just before the end of the service in the Abbey, when all the air about was ringing with the echo of the Amens, Purcell at last screwed his courage to the sticking-point, and went out, to meet his fate.

Poor young fellow, he could not have been more alarmed had he gone to face a lion instead of a lady. The lion would have been nothing. He would have called out for succour, and used whatever weapons he could

lay hold of; but nobody could help him with Lottie—no shield would cover him from the lightnings of her eyes. It was all embarrassing, all terrible; even if by any chance things should turn out in his favour, he did not know what he should do. What could he call her? Not Lottie, that was too familiar. Not Miss Despard. All these different and disjointed thoughts seemed to float about his head in the maze of excitement he was in—he was past thinking, but such questions kept floating in and out of his mind. It was the most extraordinary relief when, going to the door of Captain Despard's house, he found that Lottie was out. If she had been there, it seemed to Purcell that he would have run away—but she was not there. He asked when she was expected back and went on, recovering his breath. He could not go home again, where presently the Signor would come from the Abbey and question him. The service, however, was not so nearly over as he thought. It was a saint's day, and there was a sermon. The precincts were very still and deserted, for most people were at church. Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, sitting at her window, saw the young musician walk across the broad silent sunshine, but he did not see her. He went up the Dean's Walk, hearing his own step echo through the silence, and past the Deanery, and out upon the slopes beyond. It was shady and sweet under the trees, which rose up close against the old wall—and all was very quiet during the time of matins, though the town went on with its usual hum down below at the foot of the hill. Purcell began to recover himself a little and take breath as he came to this shelter and refuge. Many a time had he strayed under these trees, thinking of *her*, wondering if he ever might be able to approach her. It was strange to be here, however, in the morning, the hour of work and engagements, which he never had to himself, and to hear the far-off sound of the organ pealing out after the sermon was over. All the common occupations of life seemed to be suspended for Purcell. He felt as ordinary men feel on an occasional stolen Sunday, when work is suspended, and the duty of church-going put aside. All was so sweet, and serene, and still—no one to disturb his thoughts: the sound of the organ in the distance keeping him aware of the fact that he was singularly, unprecedentedly liberated from his usual occupations: and the tremor of agitation dying away into an excitement which was more bearable, which left room for all the sweeter musings, of which *she* was the centre. He sat down on the root of a tree, and let himself breathe. Then came the first notes of the voluntary, and a distant hum as of the congregation dispersing. Few people were likely to come here at this hour in the morning, but still Purcell felt that he had but a moment in which to indulge himself, and that soon he must turn back.

As he sat thus trying to collect himself, a sudden sound close by, the rustle of a dress among the bushes, the soft sound of a footstep caught his ear. He looked up—and his heart jumped into his throat. There She stood before him, a little basket in her hand. There was a by-way into the town by the slopes, and Lottie had been about her marketing. She was

in her usual simple morning frock, clean print and nothing more, and though her head was sufficiently full of dreams and her mind of anxieties, she was at present lingering upon neither, but going straight from one place to another, as became the active morning hour and the consciousness of various things to do. When she saw Purcell spring to his feet suddenly in the midst of the path, for the moment Lottie was startled. She made him a little gracious but indifferent sign of recognition, as courtesy required—for ridiculous as were the notions in his head, she could not be rude to him—and was passing on, not wanting any further parley, when she was struck by the agitation in his face. He was staring at her as if she had been a ghost—his mouth was open, his breath coming quick, his colour changing. Excitement did not improve his appearance. She had almost laughed, then checked herself remorsefully, and became so much the more sympathetic for her temporary movement of mirth.

"Is there anything the matter?" she said kindly. "I am afraid you are ill. Has anything—gone wrong?" She did not know what to say, he looked at her with such solemn eyes.

"Oh, nothing—nothing has gone wrong. I am not ill. Miss Despard—I did not expect to see you here."

"No—but I hope it is not I who have frightened you," said Lottie. "I sometimes go to the Bridge road this way."

"You have not frightened me," said Purcell, who found it easier to repeat her words than to say anything original; but I—did not know you went this way."

It was all that Lottie could do, once more, to keep herself from laughing. She gave him a little nod, and was about to pass, saying, "What a lovely morning it is," the stereotyped English remark; when he made a hurried step after her, and, holding up his hands, entreated her, in a piteous voice, to stay a moment. "Miss Despard—what startled me was that I was looking for you. Oh, stay a moment, and let me speak to you!" he said.

Lottie stood still, arrested in her progress, throwing a wondering look upon him. What could he want with her? Her first glance was simple surprise—her second—Was it possible he could mean *that*?—could he be bold enough, rash enough? Next moment she blushed for her own folly. To be afraid of young Purcell! That was foolishness indeed. She stood still there, one foot put out to go on, her basket in her hand.

"Please say what it is, Mr. Purcell. I have got something to do. I ought to be at home."

The morning is not the moment for a love tale. How much more congenial would have been the evening, the twilight, the subdued poetic hour, after the sun had disappeared, that great busybody who shows every imperfection, and is himself so perpetually moving on! Something to do was in every line of Lottie's energetic figure. She had no time for lingering, nor wish to linger. "Please say what it is." Only business should be treated in this summary way, not love.

"Miss Despard," said the young musician, whose limbs were trembling under him, "I wanted to say a great deal to you; it is very important—for me. Things are going well with me," he added, with desperation, after a momentary pause. "I have been appointed to a church—a fine church—with a good instrument. They are to give me a good salary, and they say I can have as much teaching as I like. I shall be very well off."

"I am glad to hear you are so fortunate," said Lottie. Her eyes were full of surprise, and for a moment there was a gleam of amusement in them. That he should waylay her to tell her this, seemed a curious piece of ostentation or folly. "I am very glad," she repeated; "but you must forgive me if I have to hasten home, for I have a great many things to do."

"One moment," he said, putting out his hand to stop her. "That was not all. The Signor thinks—you know the Signor, Miss Despard, there is not a better musician in the country—he thinks I will make progress. He thinks I may rise—as high as any one can rise in our profession. He tells me I may be a rich man yet before I die."

"Indeed, I hope all he says will come true," said Lottie; "but why you should take the trouble to tell me—— "

Then suddenly she caught his eye, and stopped short, and blushed an angry red. She saw what was coming in a moment, which did not, however, prevent her from drawing herself up with a great deal of dignity, and adding, "I don't know what you mean."

"Miss Despard," he said with a gasp, "there is no comparison between me and you. But you are not so well off—not happy. They say—you know how people will talk—that there is something going to happen that will make you very uncomfortable."

"Stop!" she said, with an involuntary cry, half of anger, half of amazement. Then she laughed. "Do you want me to acknowledge that you are much better off than I am?" she said; "but there is no need to compare you with me."

"It could not be done, Miss Lottie. I know it could not be done. You are a lady, and far above me. I know I am not your equal—in some things."

Lottie began to be too angry to laugh, but yet she was provoked to ridicule, which is the keenest of weapons. She made him a little mocking curtsey. "It is very kind of you to say so, I am sure, for we are quite poor people, Mr. Purcell; not fortunate, and getting on in the world like you."

"No, Miss Despard," he said, simply, "that was just what I wanted to say. If you had been as well off as I could wish, I should not have ventured to say anything. I have always loved you, and thought of you above all the world. Since you first came to St. Michael's, I have never thought of any one but you. It has been my hope that some time or

other I might be able to—but it was only just yesterday that I heard something that made me settle—two things——"

She did not speak, being indeed too angry and annoyed for speech; but she felt a kind of contemptuous, wrathful interest in what he was saying, and curiosity to know what it was that had induced him to make this venture; and, accordingly, gave him a glance, in which there was an impatient question. Purcell was not too discriminating. He felt encouraged by being listened to, from whatsoever motive.

"Two things," he said, with stolid steadiness. "One, to take Sturminster. I had settled before I would not take it, but St. Ermengilde's. But when I heard *that*, I changed my mind, though it did not please the Signor. Sturminster will make me independent; it will give me a home. And then I settled to tell you, Miss Lottie: if you are uncomfortable at home, if you don't like things that may be going to happen: to tell you that there's another home ready for you, if you will have it; a home that may be made very comfortable; a place of your own, to do what you like with, that will be waiting for you, whenever you please, at a moment's notice, the sooner the better. If you would say yes, I would go directly, I would go to-morrow and prepare; and nobody would be able to give you trouble or make you uncomfortable any longer. Only say the word, and there is nothing, nothing I would not do——"

Lottie stood and gazed at him, wondering, bitterly ashamed and humiliated, and yet not without a sense that so much simple devotion was worth more than to be crushed or scorned or flung from her, as she wished to fling it. She restrained herself with an effort. "What do you mean?" she said. "Is it possible that you are asking me to *marry* you, Mr. Purcell? That cannot be what you mean."

"What else could it be?" he said, turning on her a look of genuine surprise. "You don't suppose, Miss Despard, that I could be thinking of anything else?"

His cheeks grew crimson, and so did hers. A cry of anger and shame and confusion came from her breast. She stamped her foot impatiently on the ground. "You would never, never have ventured to ask me, never, if I had not been helpless and friendless and poor!"

"No," he said again, with a simplicity in which she could not help feeling a certain nobleness. "I would not have ventured, for I am not what you call a gentleman; but when I heard you were in trouble, I could not keep silent. I thought to myself, Miss Lottie shall not be unhappy because of having no home to go to——"

"Oh!" said Lottie, putting out her hand to stop him. She could not bear any more. Her heart was sick with the mortification of such a suit. She could have crushed and trampled upon her humble lover, in rage and shame, and yet she could not but see the generosity and truth in his heart. If he had been less worthy, it would have been less hard upon her. "It is not a thing that can be," she cried hastily. "Oh, don't say another word. I know you are kind, but it is not a thing that can be."

"Not now?" he said, looking at her wistfully; "well: but perhaps another time? perhaps when you need it more—I am not in any hurry. Perhaps I am young to marry; the Signor thinks so. But another time, Miss Lottie? Whenever you want me, you have but to say the word."

"Oh, don't think of it. I will never, never say the word. Forget it altogether, Mr. Purcell. I am very, very much obliged to you; but indeed it can never be."

The young man's countenance fell. Then he recovered himself. "I can't think you are taking everything into consideration. We should have a nice home, plenty of everything, and I should never spare trouble to give you everything you were used to——"

"Oh, go away, go away!" she cried.

And as they stood there, some one else, his shadow slowly moving before him, came round the corner of the pathway, among the chestnut-trees; and Purcell felt that his opportunity was over. He was not sorry for it. He had done what was set before him; and if he had not succeeded, he was not discouraged. There was still hope for another time.

SITTING UNSEEN UNDER THE SHADOWY TREES.

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THE

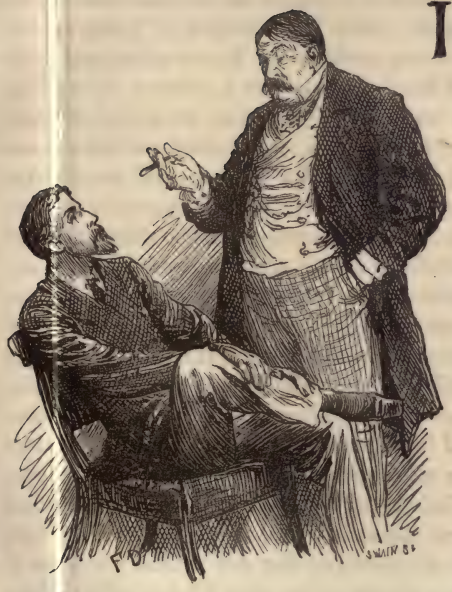
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

AUGUST, 1878.

Within the Precincts.

CHAPTER XIX.

Business, or Love?



IT was not only in the mind of young Purcell that Lottie's circumstances and prospects were the subject of thought. Rollo Ridsdale had not watched and worshipped as the young musician had done. Nor had he, even on his first introduction to her, looked upon Lottie as anything but the possessor of a beautiful voice, of which use might be made, for her benefit no doubt in the long run, but primarily for his own. She was not a divinity; she was not even a woman; she was a valuable stock-in-trade, a most important implement with which to work. Rollo had gone through a very effectual training in this kind. He had run through the little money he possessed so soon, and had learned the use of his wits so early, that the most energetic of tradesmen was not more

alive to all the charms of gain than he. The means, perhaps, may be of a different kind, but it does not very much matter in principle whether a man is trained to sharp bargains in bric-a-brac, or in cotton bales; and it is not essentially a loftier trade to speculate in pictures and china than in shares and stocks. This young aristocrat had kept his eyes very wide open to anything that might come in his way. He was not a director of companies chiefly because his poor little Honourable was not a sufficiently valuable possession to be traded upon, though it had some small value pecuniarily. Lord Courtland himself might indeed have made a few hundreds a year out of his title, but to his second son the name was not worth as much. It secured him some advantages. It gave him the *entrée* to places where things were to be "picked up," and it helped him to puff and even to dispose of the wares which he might have in hand. It kept him afloat; it ameliorated poverty; it took away all objections to the sale and barter in which, profitably or unprofitably, he spent so much of his life. Had he gone upon the Stock Exchange, society might have made comments upon the strange necessity; but when Rollo's collection of *objets d'art* was sold, nobody found anything to object to in the transaction, which put a comfortable sum in his pocket, and enabled him to go forth to fresh fields and pastures new; neither was there anything unbecoming his nobility in the enterprise which he had now in hand. Theatres are not generally a very flourishing branch of commerce; yet it cannot be denied that those who ruin themselves by them, embark in the enterprise with as warm an inclination towards gain as any shopkeeper could boast of. Rollo had thought of Lottie's voice as something quite distinct from any personality. It was a commodity he would like to buy, as he would have liked to buy a picture, or anything rare and beautiful, of which he could be sure that he would get more than his own money for it. In that, as in other things, he would have bought in the cheapest market and sold in the dearest. He would have thought it only right and natural to secure at a low rate the early services of a prima donna. A certain amount of enthusiasm no doubt mingled with the business; just as, had Rollo bought a picture and sold it again, he would have derived a considerable amount of enjoyment from it over and above the profit which went into his pocket; but still he would not have bought the picture, or sought out the future prima donna, on any less urgent and straightforward stimulus than that of gain. Probably, too, the artistic temperament—those characteristics which have to answer for so many things—influenced him more in the pursuit of the talent which was to make his fortune, than any man is ever influenced by bales of cotton or railway shares. To hear that "shirtings are firm" does not thrill the heart as it does to hear the melody of a lovely new voice, which you feel will pay you nobly by transporting the rest of the world as it does yourself. Neither could any amount of coupons fill you with delight like that small scrap of a Bellini by which you hope to *faire fortune*. But, nevertheless, to make his fortune was what Rollo thought of just

as much as the man who sells dusters over his counter. If a new kind of duster could be found more efficacious than any previously known, a something that would dust by itself, that would sell by the million, no doubt the shopkeeper, too, would feel a moment's enthusiasm; yet in this he would be quite inferior to the inventor of a new prima donna, who, added to his enjoyment of all that the public gave to hear her, would have the same enjoyment as had the public, without giving anything for it at all.

This had been the simple enthusiasm in Rollo's mind up to his last meeting with Lottie Despard. He had pursued her closely that he might fully understand and know all the qualities of her voice—of the slave he wanted to buy: to know exactly what training it would want, and how much would have to be done to it before it could appear before the public, and begin to pay back what he had given for it. And point by point, as he pursued this quest of his, he had noted in her the qualities of beauty, the grace, the expression, the perfection of form and feature, which were so many additional advantages. The rush of colour to her cheek, of spirit or softness to her eyes, had delighted him, as proving in her the power to be an actress as well as a singer. He studied all her looks, interpreted her character to himself, and watched her movements with this end, with a frank indifference to every other, not even thinking what interpretation might be put, what interpretation she might herself put, upon this close and anxious attention. It was not till the evening when, overcome by the feelings which music and excitement had roused in her, Lottie had fled alone to her home, avoiding his escort, that he had suddenly awoke to the consciousness that it was no mere voice, but a young and beautiful woman, with whom he was dealing. The awakening gave him a shock—yet there was pleasure in it, and a flattering consciousness that his prima donna had all along been regarding him in no abstract, but an entirely individual, way. Rollo had been brought up among artificial sentiments. He had been used to hear people talk of the effect of music upon their imagination—of the sensations it gave them, and the manner in which they were dominated by it. But he had never seen any one honestly moved like Lottie—abandoning the sphere of her social success, silent in the height of her triumph. When he saw that she could not and would not sing again after that wonderful sacred song, he was himself more vividly impressed than he had ever been by music. It took her voice from her, and her breath—transported her out of herself. How strange it was, yet how real, how natural! just (when you came to think of it) as a pure and elevated mind ought to be touched: though he had never yet seen the fumes of art get so completely into any head before. The reality of Lottie's emotion had awakened Rollo. He was not touched himself by Handel, but he was touched by Lottie. He suddenly saw *her* through the mist of his own preconceived ideas, and through the cloud of conventionalities, those of art and those of society alike. Never in his life before had he

so suddenly and distinctly come in contact with a genuine human creature, as God had made her—feeling, moving, living according to the dictates of nature, not as she had been trained to live and feel. This is not to say that he had met with no genuine people in his life. His father and mother were real enough, and so was his aunt, Lady Caroline —very real, each in his or her little setting of conveniences and necessities. He knew them, and was quite indifferent to knowing them. But Lottie was altogether detached from the atmosphere in which these good people lived. And he had discovered her suddenly, making acquaintance with her in a moment—finding her out as an astronomer, all alone with the crowds of heaven, finds out a new star. This was how it made so great an impression on him. He had discovered her, standing quite alone among all the women who knew how to express and to control their emotions. She was not trained either to one or the other. The emotion, the enthusiasm in her got the upper hand of her, not she of them. A man who is only used to men and women in the secondary stages of well-sustained emotion is apt to be doubly impressed by the sight of genuine and artless passion, of whatever kind it may be. He went to town thinking not of the prima donna he had found, but of the woman who had suddenly made heaven and earth real to him, as they were to her. He posted up to London—that is, he flew thither in the express train, according to the dictates of his first impulse; but he was so entirely carried away by this second one, that he had almost forgotten his primary purpose altogether. "Ah! that is it," he said to himself when the prima donna idea once more flashed across his mind. He did not want to lose sight of this, or to be negligent of anything that would help to make his fortune.

Rollo was in the greatest need of having his fortune made. He had nothing except very expensive habits. He was obliged to spend a great deal of money in order to live, and he was obliged to live (or so, at least, he thought); and he had no money at all. Therefore a prima donna or something else was absolutely necessary. Accordingly he wound himself up with great energy, and tried to think no more of that other world which Lottie's touch had plunged him into. In the meantime, in this world of theatres, drawing-rooms, and fashionable coteries, where people are compelled to live, whether they will or not, at an enormous cost in money, and where accordingly money must be hunted wherever scent of it can be found, it was necessary that some one, or something, should make Rollo Ridsdale's fortune. He rushed to his impresario, and roused a faint enthusiasm momentarily in the mind of that man of great undertakings. An English prima donna, a native article, about whom the English would go wild! Yes! But would they go wild over an English prima donna? Would not the first step be, ere she was presented to the public at all, to fit her with an Italian name? Signorina Carlotta Desparda—that was what she would have to be called. The impresario shook his head. "And, besides, these native articles never

turn out what we are led to expect," he said. He shook his head; he was sorry, very sorry, to disappoint his *confrère*, but——"

"But—I tell you, you never heard such a voice; the compass of it—the sweetness of it! *simpatica* beyond what words can say—fresh as a lark's—up to anything you can put before her—and with such power of expression. We shall be fools, utter fools, if we neglect such a chance."

"You are very warm," said the Manager, rubbing his hands. "She is pretty, I suppose?"

"No," said Rollo; "she is beautiful—and with the carriage of a queen." (Poor Lottie, in her white frock; how little she knew that there was anything queenlike about her!) "Come down and see her. That is all I ask of you. Come and hear her——"

"Where may that be?" said the Manager. "I am leaving town on Monday. Can't we have her up to your rooms, or somewhere at hand?"

"My rooms!" said Rollo, thunderstruck. He knew very little about Lottie, except that she was a poor Chevalier's daughter; but he felt that he could have as easily invited one of the Princesses to come and sing in his rooms, that the representatives of the new opera company might judge of her gifts. His face grew so long that his colleague laughed.

"Is she a personage then, Ridsdale? Is she one of your great friends?" he said.

"She is one of my—friends; but she is not a great personage," said Rollo gloomily, pulling the little peaked beard which he cultivated, and thinking that it would be as difficult to get his manager invited to the Deanery as it would be to bring Lottie to Jermyn Street. These were difficulties which he had not foreseen. He went over the circumstances hurriedly, trying to think what he could do. Could he venture to go in suddenly to the Chevalier's lodge, as he had done with Lady Caroline's credentials in his pocket, but this time without any credentials, and introduce his companion, and without further ceremony proceed to test the powers of the girl, who he knew was not always compliant nor to be reckoned on? What if she should decline to be tried? What if she had no intention of becoming a singer at all? What if the Manager should condemn her voice as untrained (which it was), or even mistake it altogether, mixing it up with the cracked tones of the old piano, and the jingle of the Abbey bells? He had not thought of all these difficulties before. He had not taken time to ask if Lottie would be docile, if Lady Caroline would be complaisant. He pulled his beard, his face growing longer and longer. At last he said,—

"I'll tell you what we can do. We can go to Mrs. O'Shaughnessy——"

"Who on earth is Mrs. O'Shaughnessy?" said the Manager.

"But, very likely there is no piano there! You see, this is a difficulty I did not think of. I have heard this lady only in the house of—one of my relations, a very rigid old person, who hates theatres, and thinks opera an invention of the devil." How Rollo dared slander poor

Lady Caroline so, who liked an opera-box as well as any one else, it is impossible to say.

"Well—it doesn't seem to matter much what are the qualities of the voice if we can't hear it," the Manager said carelessly; and he told his fashionable partner of the singer he had heard of in Milan, who was to distance all the singers then on the operatic stage. "They are all like that," he said—"like this private nightingale of yours, Ridsdale—till you hear them; and then they turn out to be very much like the rest. To tell the truth, I am not so very sorry this particular *protégée* of yours has broken down; for I don't believe the time has come for an English prima donna, if it ever comes. We've got no confidence in ourselves, so far as art goes—especially musical art. English opera, sir; there's many fine pieces, but you'll never keep it up in England. It might make a hit, perhaps, in Germany, or even France, but not here. Your English prima donna would be considered fit for the music-halls. We'd have to dress her up in vowels, and turn her into an Italian. Contemptible? Oh, yes, it's contemptible; but, if we're to make our own money out of it, we mustn't trouble ourselves about what's contemptible. What we've got to do is to please the public. I'm just as glad that this idea of yours has broken down."

"Broken down! I will never allow it has broken down. It is much easier and pleasanter, of course, to go to Milan than to go to St. Michael's," said Rollo disdainfully. "But never mind; if you don't start till Monday, trust me to arrange it somehow. Your new Milanese, of course, will be like all the rest. She will have been brought up to it. She will know how to do one thing, and no more; but this is genius—owing nothing to education and everything to nature. Capable of—I could not say what such a voice and such a woman is not capable of——"

"Bravo, Ridsdale!" said his partner. "She is capable of stirring you up thoroughly, that is clear—and I hope she will be kind to you," he said, with a big laugh, full of insinuations. The man was vulgar and fat, but a mountain of energy, and Rollo, though disgusted, could not afford to quarrel with him.

"You are entirely out in your notion," he said, with that air of dignity which is apt to look fictitious in such circumstances. He was not himself easily shocked, nor would this interpretation of his motives have appeared to him at all unlikely in the case of another man; therefore, as was natural, his gravity and look of disgust only confirmed the suspicions of the other, and amused him the more.

"Bravo, my boy; go in and win!" he said, chuckling; "promise whatever you like, if you find it necessary, and trust to me to back you up."

To say "I am unable to understand what you mean," as Rollo did, with cold displeasure, yet consciousness, did but increase the ecstasy of the fat Manager over the evident fact that his fastidious friend was "caught at last."

Rollo went away with a great deal of offended dignity, holding him-

self stiffly erect, body and soul. He had never been so entirely disgusted, revolted, by the coarse character of the ideas and insinuations, which in themselves were not particularly novel, he was aware. It was because everything grew coarse under the touch of such a fellow as this, he said to himself; and it must be allowed that vice, stripped of all sentiment and adornment, was a disgusting spectacle. Rollo had never been a vicious man. He had taken it calmly in others, acknowledging that, if they liked it, he had no right to interfere; but he had not cared for it much himself—he was not a man of passions. A dilettante generally does avoid these coarser snares of humanity; and there had always been a sense of nausea in his mind when he was brought in contact with the vicious. But this nausea had been more physical than spiritual. It was not virtue but temperament which produced it; his own temptations were not in this kind. Nevertheless, he knew that to show any exaggerated feeling on the subject would only expose him to laughter, and he was not courageous enough either to blame warmly in others, or to decry strenuously in himself, the existence of unlawful bonds. What did it matter to anybody if he were virtuous? his neighbours were not on that account to be baulked of their cakes and ale; his disinclination towards sins of the grosser kind was not a thing he was proud of—it was a constitutional peculiarity, like inability to ascend heights or to go to sea without suffering. He was not at all sure that it was not a sign of weakness—a thing to be kept out of sight. Accordingly he took his part in the social gossip, which has no warmer interest than this, like everybody else, never pretended to any superiority, and took it for granted that now and then everybody "went wrong." He would have been a monster if he had done anything else. Why, even his good aunt Caroline—the best and stupidest of women, to whom, if she had desired it, no opportunity of going wrong had ever presented itself—liked to hear these stories and believed them implicitly, and was convinced that not to go wrong was quite exceptional. Rollo was not the man to emancipate himself from such a complete and universal understanding. He allowed it calmly, and did not pretend either to disapprove or to doubt. Probably he had himself coldly, and as a matter of course, "gone wrong" too in his day, and certainly he had never given himself out as at all better than his neighbours. Was it only the coarseness of his vulgar associate which made the suggestion so deeply disgusting to him now?

He asked himself this question as, disappointed and annoyed, he left the Manager's ostentatious rooms; and a new sense of unkindness, ungenerosity, unmanliness in having exposed a harmless person, a woman whose reputation should be sacred, to such animadversions, suddenly came into his mind, he could not tell how. This view of the matter had never occurred to Rollo before. The women he had heard discussed—and he had heard almost everybody discussed, from the highest to the lowest—had nothing sacred about them to the laughing gossips who discussed all they had done, or might have done, or might be going to do. This,

too, was a new idea to him. Who was there whom he had not heard spoken of? ladies a thousand times more important than Miss Despard, the poor Chevalier's daughter at St. Michael's—and nobody had seemed to think there was any harm in it. A man's duty not to let a woman be lightly spoken of? Pooh! What an exaggerated sentimental piece of nonsense! Why should not women take their chance like any one else? Rollo was like most other persons when in a mental difficulty of this kind. He was not so much discussing with himself as he was the arena of a discussion which unseen arguers were holding within him. While one of these uttered this Pooh! another replied, with a heat and fervour altogether unknown to the clubs, What had Lottie Despard done to subject herself to these suggestions? she who knew nothing about society and its evil thoughts—she who had it in her to be uplifted and transported by the music at which these other people, at the best, would clap their hands and applaud. The argument in Rollo's mind went all against himself and his class. He hated not only his manager-partner, whom it was perfectly right and natural to hate, but himself and all the rest of his kind. He was so much disgusted that he almost made up his mind to let fortune and the English prima donna go together, and to take no further step to make the girl known to those who were so incapable of appreciating her. But when he came that length Rollo had reached the end of his tether, struck against the uttermost limits of his horizon—and thus was brought back suddenly to the question how he was best to make his prize known?

CHAPTER XX.

An Unconscious Trial.

It turned out, however, that Rollo could not accomplish the object, which he had aimed at with so much eagerness and hope, in the only legitimate way. He could not get his Manager invited to the Deanery. "I don't think your aunt would like it; I don't think I could sanction it," the Dean said, whom he met at his club. Unfortunately the Dean had somewhere encountered the partner by whose aid Rollo expected to make his fortune, and he made it the subject of a little discourse, which Rollo received with impatience. "I would have nothing to do with him if I were you," his Reverence said; "he is not a kind of man to be any credit to his associates. You can't touch pitch without being defiled. I would not have anything to say to him if I were you."

"Nor should I, uncle, if I were you," said Rollo, with a rueful smile. He was not aware that this was not original; he was not thinking, indeed, of originality, but of the emergency, which he felt was very difficult to deal with.

"Nonsense!" said the Dean; "don't tell me there are not a great many better occupations going than that of managing a theatre——"

"Opera—opera. Give us our due at least——"

"What difference is there?" said the Dean sternly. "The opera has ruined just as many men as the theatre. Talk of making your fortune! Did you ever hear of the lessee of a theatre making a fortune? Plenty have been ruined by it, and never one made rich that I ever heard of. Why can't you go into diplomacy or to a public office, or get your Uncle Urban to give you something? You ought not to have anything to do with such a venture as this."

"My dear uncle," said Rollo, "you know well enough how many things I have tried. Uncles are very kind (as in your case), but they can't take all their relations upon their shoulders; and you knew this was what I was doing, and Aunt Caroline knew——"

"Ah! yes; I recollect that was what all the singing was about; but she could not stand that Manager fellow. I could not stand him myself; as for your aunt, you could not expect it. She is very good-natured, but you could not ask her to go so far as that."

"He is a man who goes everywhere," said Rollo; "he is a man who can behave himself perfectly well wherever he is."

"Oh, bless you, she would see through him at a glance!" cried the Dean. "I don't mean to say your aunt is clever, Rollo, but instinct goes a long way. She would see through him. Miss Despard was quite different; she was perfectly *comme il faut*. Girls are wonderful sometimes in that way. Though they may have no advantages they seem to pick up and look just as good as any one: whereas a man like that—— By the way, I am very sorry for the poor thing. They say her father, a disreputable sort of gay man who never should have got the appointment, is going to marry some low woman. It will be hard upon the girl."

What an opportunity was this of seizing hold upon her—of overcoming any objection that might arise! Rollo felt himself Lottie's best friend as he heard of this complication. While she might help to make his fortune he could make her independent, above the power of any disreputable father or undesirable home. He could not bear to think that such a girl should be lost in conditions so wretched, and, though the Dean was obdurate, he did not lose hope. But between Thursday and Monday is not a very long time for such negotiations, and the Manager was entirely preoccupied by his Milanese, whom another impresario was said to be on the track of, and in whom various connoisseurs were interested. It is impossible to describe the scorn and incredulity with which Rollo himself heard his partner's account of this new singer. He put not the slightest faith in her.

"I know how she will turn out," he said. "She will shriek like a peacock; she will have to be taught her own language; she will be coached up for one *rôle* and good for nothing else; and she will smell of garlic enough to kill you."

"Oh, garlic will never kill me!" said the vulgar partner who gave Rollo so much trouble.

In the meantime he wrote to the Signor to see what could be done, and begged with the utmost urgency that he would arrange something. "Perhaps the old Irishwoman next door would receive us," Rollo said, "even if she has got no piano. Try, my dear Rossinetti, I implore you; try your best." The Signor was very willing to serve the Dean's nephew; but he was at the moment very much put out by Lottie's reception of young Purcell, as much as if it had been himself that had been refused.

"Who is Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, and how am I to communicate with her?" he cried; and he did not throw himself into the work with any zeal. All that he would do at last, moved by Rollo's repeated letters, was to bid him bring his friend down to the service on Sunday afternoon, when he would see Lottie at least, and hear something of her voice. The Manager grinned at this invitation. He was not an enthusiast for Handel, and shrugged his shoulders at sacred music generally as much out of his line; but he ended, having no better engagement on hand, by consenting to go. It was the end of the season; the opera was over, and all its fashionable patrons dispersed; and St. Michael's was something to talk of at least. So the two connoisseurs arrived on a warm afternoon of early August, when the grey pinnacles of the Abbey blazed white in excessive sunshine, and the river showed like glowing metal here and there through the broad valley, too brilliant to give much refreshment to the eyes.

As it happened, it was a chance whether Lottie would attend the service that afternoon at all. She was sorry for poor Purcell, and embarrassed to face the congregation in the Abbey, some of whom at least must know the story. She was certain the Signor knew it, from the glance he had thrown at her; and Mrs. Purcell, she felt sure, would gloom at her from the free seats, and the hero himself look wistful and reproachful from the organ-loft. She had very nearly made up her mind not to go. Would it not be better to go out on the slopes, and sit down under a tree, and hear the music softly pealing at a distance, and get a little rest out of her many troubles? Lottie had almost decided upon this when suddenly, by a caprice, she changed her mind and went. Everything came true as she had divined. Mrs. Purcell fixed her eyes upon her from the moment she sat down in her place, with a gloomy interest which sadly disconcerted Lottie; and so did old Pick, who sat by his fellow-servant and chuckled over the conclusion of Mr. John's romance; while once at least Lottie caught the pale dulness of the Signor's face looking disapproval, and at every spare moment the silent appeal of Purcell's eyes looking down from over the railing of the organ-loft. Lottie's heart revolted a little in resistance to all these pitiful and disapproving looks. Why should they insist upon it? If she could not accept young Purcell, what was it to the Signor and old Pick?—though his mother might be forgiven if she felt the disappointment of her boy. The girl shrank a little from all those glances, and gave herself up altogether to her devotions. Was it to her devotions? There was the

Captain chanting all the responses within hearing, cheerful and self-confident, as if the Abbey belonged to him; and there, too, was Law, exchanging glances of a totally different description with the people in the free seats. It was to two fair-haired girls whom Lottie had seen before—who were, indeed, constant in their attendance on the Sunday afternoon—that Law was signalling, and they, on their part, tittered and whispered, and looked at the Captain in his stall, and at another woman in a veil whom Lottie did not make out. This was enough to distract her from the prayers, to which, however, if only to escape from the confusion of her own thoughts, she did her very best to give full attention. But—— She put up her prayer-book in front of her face, and hid herself at least from all the crowd, so full each of his and her own concerns. She was silent during the responses, hearing nothing but her father's voice with its tone of proprietorship, and only allowed herself to sing when the Captain's baritone was necessarily silent. Lottie's voice had become known to the people who sat near her. They looked for her as much as they looked for little Rowley himself, who was the first soprano; but to-day they did not get much from Lottie. Now and then she forgot herself, as in the Magnificat, when she burst forth suddenly unawares, almost taking it out of the hands of the boys; but while she was singing Lottie came to herself almost as suddenly, and stopped short, with a quaver and shake in her voice as if the thread of sound had been suddenly broken. Raising her eyes in the midst of the canticle, she had seen Rollo Ridsdale within a few places of her, holding his book before him very decorously, yet looking from her to a large man by his side with unmistakable meaning. The surprise of seeing him whom she believed to be far away, the agitation it gave her to perceive that she herself was still the chief point of interest to him, and the sudden recalling thus of her consciousness, gave her a shock which extinguished her voice altogether. There was a thrill in the music as if a string had broken; and then the hymn went on more feebly, diminished in sweetness and volume, while she stood trembling, holding herself up with an effort. He had come back again, and again his thoughts were full of her, his whole attention turned to her. An instantaneous change took place in Lottie's mind. Instead of the jumble of annoyances and vexations that had been around her—the reproachful looks on one side, the family discordance on the other—her father and Law both jarring with all that Lottie wished and thought right—a flood of celestial calm poured into her soul. She was no longer angry with the two fair-haired girls who tittered and whispered through the service, looking up to Law with a hundred telegraphic communications. She was scarcely annoyed when her father's voice pealed forth again in pretentious incorrectness. She did not mind what was happening around her. The sunshine that came in among the pinnacles and fretwork above in a golden mist, lighting up every detail, yet confusing them in a dazzle and glory which common eyes could not bear, made just such an effect on the canopies of the stalls as Rollo's ap-

pearance made on Lottie's mind. She was all in a dazzle and mist of sudden calm and happiness which seemed to make everything bright, yet blurred everything in its soft, delicious glow.

"Don't think much of her," said the Manager, as they came out. The two were going back again at once to town, but Rollo's partner had supposed that at least they would first pay a visit to the Deanery. He was a man who counted duchesses on his roll of acquaintances, but he liked to add a Lady Caroline whenever the opportunity occurred, and deans, too, had their charm. He was offended when he saw that Rollo had no such intention, and at once divined that he was not considered a proper person to be introduced to the heads of such a community. This increased his determination not to yield to his partner in this fancy of his, which, indeed, he had always considered presumptuous, finding voices being his own share of the work—a thing much too important to be trusted to an amateur. "The boy has a sweet little pipe of his own; but as for your prima donna, Ridsdale, if you think that sort of thing would pay with us ——! No, no! my good fellow; she's a deuced handsome girl, and I wish you joy; I don't wonder that she should have turned your head; but for our new house, not if I know it, my boy. A very nice voice for an amateur, but that sort of thing does not do with the public."

"You scarcely heard her at all; and the few notes she did sing were so mixed up with those scrubby little boys——"

"Oh! I heard her, and I don't care to hear her again—unless it were in a drawing-room. Why, there's Rossinetti," said the impresario; "he'll tell you just the same as I do. Do you know what we're down here for, Rossinetti, eh? Deluded by Ridsdale to come and hear some miraculous voice; and it turns out to be only a charming young lady who has bewitched him, as happens to the best of us. Pretty voice for a drawing-room, nice amateur quality; but for the profession—— I tell him you must know that as well as I."

"Come into my place and rest a little; there is no train just yet," said the Signor. He had left Purcell to play the voluntary, and led the strangers through the nave, which was still crowded with people listening to the great strains of the organ. "Come out this way," he said; "I don't want to be seen. Purcell plays quite as well as I do; but if they see me they will stream off, and hurt his feelings. Poor boy! he has had enough to vex him already."

These words were on his lips when, coming out by a private door, the three connoisseurs suddenly came upon Lottie, who was walking home with Mrs. O'Shaughnessy. The Signor, who was noted for a womanish heat of partisanship and had not forgiven her for the disappointment of his pupil, darted a violent glance at her as he took off his hat. It might have been himself that she had rejected, so full of offence was his look; and this fixed the attention of the big manager, who took off his hat, too, with a smile of secret amusement, and watched the scene, making a private

memorandum to the effect that Rossinetti evidently had been hit also; and no wonder! a handsome girl as you could see in a summer day, with a voice that was a very nice voice, a really superior voice for an amateur.

As for Rollo, he hastened up to Mrs. O'Shaughnessy with fervour, and held out his hand; and how happy and how proud was that kind woman! She curtseyed as she took his hand as if he had been the Prince of Wales, nearly pulling him down, too, ere she recovered herself; and her countenance shone, partly with the heat, partly with the delight.

"And I hope I see *you* well, sir," she said; "and glad to see you back in St. Michael's; there's nothing like young people for keeping a place cheerful. Though we don't go into society, me and me Major, yet it's a pleasure to see the likes of you about."

Rollo had time to turn to Lottie with very eloquent looks while this speech was being addressed to him. "I am only here for half an hour," he said; "I could not resist the temptation of coming for the service."

"Oh! me dear sir, you wouldn't care so much for the sarvice if ye had as much of it as we have," said Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, going on well pleased; she liked to hear herself talking, and she had likewise a quick perception of the fact that, while she talked, communications of a different kind might go on between "the young folks." "Between ourselves, it's not me that they'll get to stop for their playing," she said, all the more distinctly that the Signor was within hearing. "I'd go five miles to hear a good band; the music was beautiful in the regiment when O'Shaughnessy was adjutant. And for me own part, Mr. Ridsdale, I'd not give the drums and the fifes for the most elegant music you could play. I don't say that I'm a judge, but I know what I like."

"Why did you stop so soon?" Rollo said, aside. "Ah! Miss Despard, was it not cruel?"—"A good band is an excellent thing, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy; I shall try to get my uncle to have the band from the depôt to play once a week, next time I come here."—"Thanks all the same for those few notes; I shall live upon them," he added fervently, "till I have the chance of hearing you again."

Lottie made no reply. It was unnecessary with Mrs. O'Shaughnessy there, and talking all the time. And, indeed, what had she to say? the words spread themselves like a balm into every corner of her heart. He would not have gone so far, nor spoken so warmly, if it had not been for the brutal indifference of the big manager, who stood looking on at a distance, with an air of understanding a great deal more than there was to understand. The malicious knowingness in this man's eyes made Rollo doubly anxious in his civilities; and then he felt it necessary to make up to Lottie for the other's blasphemy in respect to her voice, though of this Lottie knew nothing at all.

"I shall not even have time to see my aunt," he said; "how fortunate that I have had this opportunity of a word with you! I did not know whether I might take the liberty to call."

"And welcome, Mr. Ridsdale," said Mrs. O'Shaughnessy. "Lottie's

but a child, so to speak; but I and the Major would be proud to see you. And of an afternoon we're always at home, and, though I say it as shouldn't, as good a cup of tea to offer ye as ye'd get from me Lady Caroline herself. It's ready now, if you'll accept the refreshment, you and—your friend."

"A thousand thanks, but we must not stay. Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, if you see my aunt will you explain how it was I could not come to see her? and be sure you tell her you met me at the Abbey door, or she will not like it. Miss Despard, Augusta is coming home, and I hope to be at the Deanery next month. *Then* I trust you will be more generous, and not stop singing as soon as you see me. What had I done?" he cried in his appealing voice.—"Yes, Rossinetti, I'm coming."—"Not Good-by, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, only, as the French say, Till we meet again."

"And I hope that will not be long," said the good woman, delighted She swept along the Dean's Walk, letting her dress trail after her and holding her head high; she was too much excited to think of holding up her skirts. "Did ye hear him, Lottie, me honey? 'If you see my aunt,' says he. Lord bless the man! as if me Lady Caroline was in the way of looking in and taking a cup of tea! Sure, I'd make her welcome, and more sense than shutting herself up in that old house, and never stirring, no, not to save her life. 'If ye see me aunt,' says he. Oh, yes! me darlint, I'll see her, shut up in her state, and looking as if—— He'll find the difference when he comes to the Deanery, as he says. Not for you, Lottie, me dear; you're one of themselves, so to speak. But it's not much thanks me Lady Caroline will give him for sending her a message by Mrs. O'Shaughnessy; I thought I'd burst out in his face. 'Tell her ye met me by the Abbey door.' That's to save me lady's feelings, Lottie. But I'll do his bidding next time I see her; I'll make no bones of it, I'll up and give her my message. Lord! just to see how me lady would take it. See if I don't now. For him, he's a jewel, take me word for it, Lottie; and ye'll be a silly girl, me honey, if you let a gentleman like Mr. Ridsdale slip through your fingers. A real gentleman, ye can see as much by his manners. If I'd been a duchess, Lottie, me dear, what more could he say?"

Lottie made no reply to this speech, any more than to the words Rollo himself had addressed to her. Her mind was all in a confused maze of happy thoughts and anticipations. His looks, his words, were all turned to the same delicious meaning; and he was coming back to the Deanery, when she was to be "more generous" to him. No compliment could have been so penetrating as that soft reproach. Lottie had no words to spend upon her old friend, who, for her part, was sufficiently exhilarated to require no answer. Mrs. O'Shaughnessy rang the changes upon this subject all the way to the Lodges. "'When you see my aunt,' says he." The idea that she was in the habit of visiting Lady Caroline familiarly, not only amused but flattered her, though it was difficult enough to understand how this latter effect could come about.

Rollo was himself moved more than he could have imagined possible by this encounter. He said nothing as he followed his companions to the Signor's house, and did not even remark what they were saying, so occupied was he in going over again the trivial events of the last few minutes. As he did so, it occurred to him for the first time that Lottie had not so much as spoken to him all the time; not a word had she said, though he had found no deficiency in her. It was evident, then, that there might be a meeting which should fill a man's mind with much pleasant excitement and commotion, and leave on his thoughts a very delightful impression, without one word said by the lady. This idea amused him in the pleasant agitation of his being to which the encounter at the church door had given rise. He forgot what he had come for, and the rudeness of his partner, and the refusal of that personage to think at all of Lottie. He did not want any further discussion of this question; he had forgotten, even, that it could require to be discussed. Somehow all at once, yet completely, Lottie had changed character to him; he did not want to talk her over with any one, and he forgot altogether the subject upon which the conversation must necessarily turn when he followed the Signor and his big companion through the groups of people who began to emerge from the Abbey. There were a great many who stared at Rollo, knowing who he was, but none who roused him from his pre-occupation. Fortunately the Dean had a cold and was not visible, and Lady Caroline did not profess to go to church in the afternoon—"It was too soon after lunch, and there were so many people, and one never felt that one had the Abbey to one's self," her ladyship said.

The Manager went off to Italy the next day, after his Milanese, without being at all restrained by Rollo, who was glad to get rid of him, and to have no more said about the English prima donna. He did not quite like it even, so perverse was he, when the Signor, sitting out upon his terrace, defended her against the impresario's hasty verdict: "She has a beautiful voice, so far as that goes," the Signor said, with the gravity of a judge; "you are mistaken if you do not admire her voice; we have had occasion to hear it, and we know what it is, so far as that goes."

"You dog!" said the jovial manager, with a large fat laugh; "I see something else if I don't see that. Ah, Rossinetti! hit too?"

"Do you happen to know what he means?" said the Signor with profound gravity, turning his fine eyes upon Ridsdale. "Ah! it is a pleasantry, I suppose; I have not the same appreciation of humour that I might have had, had I been born an Englishman," he said, with a seriousness that was portentous, without relaxing a muscle.

Rollo, who was not aware of the vehement interest with which the Signor espoused Purcell's cause, felt the Manager's suspicions echo through his own mind. He knew how entirely disinclined he felt to enter upon this question. Was his companion right, and had the Signor been hit, too? It seemed to Rollo that the wonder was how any one

could avoid that catastrophe. The manager made very merry, as they went back to town, upon Lottie's voice and the character of the admiration which it had excited; but all this Rollo received with as much solemnity of aspect as characterised the Signor.

CHAPTER XXI.

Searchings of Heart.

It was not to be supposed that the visit of Rollo and his companion should pass unnoticed in so small a community as that of St. Michael's, where everybody knew him, and in which he had all the importance naturally belonging to a member, so to speak, of the reigning family. Everybody noticed his appearance in the Abbey, and it soon became a matter of general talk that he was not at the Deanery, but had come down from town expressly for the service, returning by as early a train afterwards as the Sunday regulations of the railway allowed. What did he come for? Not to see his relations, which would have been a comprehensible reason for so brief a visit. He had been seen talking to somebody at the north door, and he had been seen following the Signor, in company with a large and brilliant person who wore more rings and studs and *breloques* than had ever been seen at St. Michael's. Finally, this remarkable stranger, who was evidently a friend of the Signor as well as of Rollo, had been visible on the little green terrace outside Rossinetti's sitting-room, smoking cigarettes and drinking claret-cup, and tilting up his chair upon two legs in a manner which suggested a tea-garden, critics said, more than a studious nook sheltered among the buttresses of the Abbey. Public opinion was instinctively unfavourable to Rollo's companion; but what was the young prince, Lady Caroline's nephew, doing there? Then the question arose, Who was it to whom Rollo had been talking at the north door? All the Canons and their wives, and the ladies in the Lodges, and even the townspeople when the story reached them, cried out, "Impossible!" when they were told that it was Mrs. O'Shaughnessy. But that lady had no intention of concealing the honour done her. She published it, so to speak, on the housetops. She neglected no occasion of making her friends acquainted with all the particulars of the interview. "And who should it have been but me?" she said. "Is there e'er another one at St. Michael's that knows as much of his family? Who was it but an uncle of his, or maybe it might be a cousin, that was in the regiment with us, and O'Shaughnessy's greatest friend? Many's the good turn the Major's done him; and, say the worst you can o' the Ridsdales, it's not ungrateful they are. It's women that are little in their ways. What does a real gentleman care for our little quarrels and the visiting list at the Deanery? 'When ye see me aunt,' says he, 'Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, ye'll tell her——' Sure he took it for certain that me Lady Caroline was a good neighbour, and would

step in of an afternoon for her bit of talk and her cup o' tea. 'You'll tell her,' says he, 'that I hadn't time to go and see her.' And, please God, I will do it when I've got the chance. If her ladyship forgets her manners, it shall ne'er be said that O'Shaughnessy's wife was wanting in good breeding to a family the Major had such close connections with."

"But do you really know—Mr. Ridsdale's family?" said Lottie, after one of these brilliant addresses, somewhat bewildered by her recollection of what had passed. "And, sure, didn't you hear me say so? Is it doubting me word you are?" said Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, with a twinkle in her eye. Lottie was bewildered—but it did not matter much. At this moment nothing seemed to matter very much. She had been dull, and she had been troubled by many things before the wonderful moment in which she had discovered Rollo close to her in the Abbey—much troubled, foreseeing with dismay the closing in around her of a network of new associations in which there could be nothing but pain and shame, and dull with a heavy depression of dulness which no ray of light in the present, no expectation in the future, seemed to brighten. Purcell's hand held out to her, tenderly yet half in pity, had been the only personal encouragement she had; and that had humbled her to the dust, even though she struggled with herself to do him justice. Her heart had been as heavy as lead. There had seemed to her nothing that was hopeful, nothing that was happy before her. Now all the heaviness had flown away. Why? Why for no reason at all, because this young man, whom she supposed (without any warrant for the foolish idea) to love her, had come back for an hour or two; because he was coming back on a visit. The visit was not to her, nor had she probable share in the enjoyments to be provided for Lady Caroline's nephew, and Lottie did not love him to make his very presence a delight to her. She did not love him—yet. This was the unexpressed feeling in her mind; but when a girl has got so far as this, it may be supposed that the visit of the lover whom she does not love—yet, must fill her with a thousand delightful tremors. How could she doubt his sentiments? What was it that brought him back and back again to St. Michael's? and to be led along that flowery way to the bower of bliss at the end of it, to be persuaded into love by all the flatteries and worship of a lover so delicately impassioned—could a girl's imagination conceive anything more exquisite? No, she was not in love—yet—— But there was no reason why she should not be, except the soft maidenly reluctance, the shy retreat before one who kept advancing, the instinct of coy resistance to an inevitable delight.

Into this delicate world of happiness, in which there was nothing real but all imagination, Lottie was delivered over that bright Sunday. She had no defence against it, and she did not wish to have any. She gave herself up to the dream. After that interval of heaviness, of darkness, when there was no pleasant delusion to support her, and life with all its difficulties and dangers became so real, confronting her at every

point, what an escape it was for Lottie to find herself again under the dreamy skies of that fool's paradise! It was the Garden of Eden to her. She thought it was the true world and the other the false one. The vague terror and disgust with which her father's new plans filled her mind, floated away like a mist; and, as for Law, what so easy as to carry him with her into the better world where she was going! Her mind in a moment was lightened of its load. She had left home heavily; she went back scarcely able to keep from singing in the excess of her light-heartedness, more lifted above earth than if any positive good had come to her. So long as the good is coming, and exists in the imagination only, how much more entrancing is it than anything real that ever can be ours!

The same event, however, which had so much effect upon Lottie, acted upon her family too in a manner for which she was far from being prepared. Captain Despard came in as much elated visibly as she was in her heart. There had been but little intercourse among them since the evening when the Captain had made those inquiries about Rollo, which Lottie resented so deeply. The storm had blown over, and she had nominally forgiven Law for going over to the enemy's side; but Lottie's heart had been shut even against her brother since that night. He had forsaken her, and she had not been able to pass over his desertion of her cause. However, her heart had softened with her happiness, and she made his tea for him now more genially than she had done for weeks before. They seated themselves round the table with perhaps less constraint than usual—a result due to the smiling aspect of the Captain as well as to the softened sentiment in Lottie's heart. Once upon a time a family tea was a favourite feature in English literature, from Cowper down to Dickens, not to speak of the more exclusively domestic fiction of which it is the chosen banquet; a great deal has been said of this nondescript (and indigestible) meal. But perhaps there must be a drawing of the curtains, a wheeling in of the sofa, a suggestion of warmth and comfort in contradistinction to storms and chills outside, as in the Opium-eater's picture of his cottage, to carry out the ideal—circumstances altogether wanting to the tea of the Despards, which was *eaten* (*passez-moi le mot*, for is it not the bread and butter that makes the meal?) in the warmest hour of an August afternoon. The window indeed was open, and the Dean's Walk, by which the townspeople were coming and going in considerable numbers, as they always did on Sunday, was visible with its gay groups, and the prospect outside was more agreeable than the meal within. Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, next door, had loosed her cap-strings, and fanned herself at intervals as she sipped her tea. "It's hot, but sure it cools you after," she was saying to her Major. The Despards, however, were not fat, and did not show the heat like their neighbours. Law sat at the table and pegged away resolutely at his bread and butter, having nothing to take his mind off his food, and no very exciting prospect of supper to sustain him. But the Captain took his

tea daintily, as one who had heard of a roast fowl and sausages to be ready by nine o'clock, and was therefore more or less indifferent to the bread and butter. He patted Lottie on the shoulder as she gave him his tea.

"My child," he said, "I was wrong the other day. It is not every man that would own it so frankly; but I have always been a candid man, though it has damaged me often. When I am in the wrong I am bound to confess it. Take my hand, Lottie, my love. I made a mistake."

Lottie looked at him surprised. He had taken her hand and held it, shaking it, half playfully, in his own.

"My love," he said, "you are not so candid as your poor father. You will get on all the better in the world. I withdraw everything I said, Lottie. All is going well, all is for the best. I make no doubt you can manage your own affairs a great deal better than I."

"What is it you mean, papa?"

"We will say no more, my child. I give you free command over yourself. That was a fine anthem this afternoon, and I have no doubt those were well repaid who came from a distance to hear it. Don't you think so, Lottie? Many people come from a great distance to hear the service in the Abbey, and no doubt the Signor made it known that there was to be such a good anthem to-day."

Lottie did not make any reply. She looked at him with mingled wonder and impatience. What did he mean? It had not occurred to her to connect Rollo with the anthem, but she perceived by the look on her father's face that something which would be displeasing to her was in his mind.

"What's the row?" said Law. "Who was there? I thought it was always the same old lot."

"And so it is generally the same old lot. *We* don't vary; but when pretty girls like Lottie say their prayers regularly, Heaven sends somebody to hear them. Oh, yes; there is always somebody sent to hear them. But you are quite right to allow nothing to be said about it, my child," said the Captain; "not a word, on the honour of a gentleman. Your feelings shall be respected. But it may be a comfort to you, my love, to feel that whatever happens your father is behind you, Lottie—knows and approves. My dear, I say no more."

"By Jove! What is it?" cried Law.

"It is nothing to you," said his father; "but look here, Law. See that you don't go out all over the place and leave your sister by herself, without any one to take care of her. My engagements I can't always give up, but don't let me hear that there's nobody to walk across the road with Lottie when she's asked out."

"Oh, that's it, is it?" said Law. "I thought they'd had enough of you at the Deanery, Lottie. That's going to begin again, then, I suppose?"

"I am not invited to the Deanery," said Lottie, with as much state and solemnity as she could summon up, though she trembled; "neither

is it going to begin again. There is no occasion for troubling Law or you either. I always have taken care of myself hitherto and I suppose I shall do it till the end."

"You need not get on your high horse, my child," said Captain Despard blandly. "Don't suppose that I will interfere; but it will be a consolation to you to remember that your father is watching over you, and that his heart goes with you," he added, with an unctuous roll in his voice. He laid his hand for a moment on her head, and said, "Bless you, my love," before he turned away. The Captain's emotion was great; it almost brought the tears to his manly eyes.

"What *is* the row?" said Law, when his father had gone. Law's attention had been fully occupied during the service with his own affairs, and he did not know of the reappearance of Rollo. "One would think he was going to cry over you, Lottie. What have you done?—Engagements! he has always got some engagement or other. I never knew a fellow with such a lot of friends—I shouldn't wonder if he was going to sup somewhere to-night. I wonder what they can see in him," said Law with a sigh.

"Law, are you going out too?"

"Oh, I suppose so; there is nothing to do in the house. What do you suppose a fellow can do? Reading is slow work; and, besides, it's Sunday, and it's wrong to work on Sunday. I shall go out and look round a bit, and see if I can see any one I know."

"Do you ever think, I wonder," said Lottie—"papa and you—that if it is so dull for you in the house, it must sometimes be a little dull for me?"

She was not in the habit of making such appeals, but to-night there was courage and a sense of emancipation in her which made her strong.

"You? Oh, well, I don't know—you are a girl," said Law, "and girls are used to it. I don't know what you would do if you wanted to have a little fun, eh? I daresay you don't know yourself. Yes, I shouldn't wonder if it was dull; but what can any one do? It's nature, I suppose," said Law; "there isn't any fun for girls as there is for us. Well, is there? How should I know?"

But there was "fun" for Emma and her sisters of the workroom, Law reminded himself with a compunction. "I'll tell you what, Lottie," he said hastily; "you must just do as other girls do. You must get some one to walk with you, and talk, and all that, you know. There's nothing else to be done; and you might have plenty. There's that singing fellow, that young Purcell; they say he's in love with you. Well; he's better than nobody; and you could give him the sack as soon as you saw somebody you liked better. I thought at one time that Ridsdale——"

"I think, Law," said Lottie, "you had better go out for your walk."

He laughed. He was half pleased to have roused and vexed her, yet

half sorry too. Poor Lottie! Now that she was abandoned by her grand admirer and all her fine friends, it must be dull for her, staying in the house by herself; but then what could he do, or any one? It was nature. Nature, perhaps, might be to blame for not providing "fun" for girls, but it was not for Law to set nature right. When he had got his hat, however, and brushed his hair before going out, he came back and looked at Lottie with a compunction. He could not give up meeting Emma in order to take his sister for a walk, though, indeed, this idea actually did glance across his mind as a rueful possibility. No, he could not go; he had promised Emma to meet her in the woods, and he must keep his word. But he was very sorry for Lottie. What a pity she had not some one of her own—Purcell, if nobody better! and then, when the right one came, she might throw him off. But Law did not dare to repeat his advice to this effect. He went and looked at her remorsefully. Lottie had seated herself upstairs in the little drawing-room; she was leaning her elbow on the ledge of the little deep window, and her head upon her hand. The attitude was pensive; and Law could not help thinking that to be a girl, and sit there all alone looking out of a window instead of roaming about as he did, would be something very terrible. The contrast chilled him and made him momentarily ashamed of himself. But then he reflected that there were a great many people passing up and down, and that he had often heard people say it was amusing to sit at a window. Very likely Lottie thought so; probably, on the whole, she liked that better than going out. This must be the case, he persuaded himself, or else she would have been sure to manage to get some companion; therefore he said nothing to her, but went downstairs very quietly and let himself out softly, not making any noise with the door. Law had a very pleasant walk with Emma under the trees, and enjoyed himself; but occasionally there would pass a shadow over him as he thought of Lottie sitting at the window in the little still house all alone.

But indeed, for that evening at least, Lottie was not much to be pitied. She had her dreams to fall back upon. She had what is absolutely necessary to happiness—not only something to look back to, but something to look forward to. That is the true secret of bliss—something that is coming. With that to support us, can we not bear anything? After a while, no doubt, Lottie felt, as she had often felt before, that it was dull. There was not a sound in the little house; everybody was out except herself; and it was Sunday, and she could not get her needlework to occupy her hands and help on her thoughts. As the brightness waned slowly away, and the softness of the evening lights and then the dimness of the approaching dark stole on, Lottie had a great longing to get out of doors; but she could not go and leave the house, for even the maid was out, having her Sunday walk with her young man. It was astonishing how many girls had gone wandering past the window, each with her young man. Not much wonder, perhaps, that Law had suggested this sole way of a little "fun" for a girl. Poor Law! he did not know any better;

he did not mean any harm. She laughed now at the suggestion which had made her angry at the time, for to-night Lottie could afford to laugh. But when she heard the maid-servant come in, Lottie, wearied with her long vigil and longing for a breath of cool air after the confinement of the house, agreed with herself that there would be no harm in taking one little turn upon the slopes. The townspeople had mostly gone. Now and then a couple of the old Chevaliers would come strolling homeward, having taken a longer walk in the calm of the Sunday evening than their usual turn on the slopes. Captain Temple and his wife had gone by arm-in-arm; perhaps they had been down to the evening service in the town, perhaps only out for a walk like everybody else. Gradually the strangers were disappearing; the people that belonged to the precincts were now almost the only people about, and there was no harm in taking a little walk alone; but it was not a thing Lottie cared much to do. With a legitimate errand she would go anywhere; but for a walk! The girl was shy, and full of all those natural conventional reluctances which cannot be got out of women; but she could not stay in any longer. She went out with a little blue shawl folded like a scarf—as was the fashion of the time—over her shoulders, and flitted quickly along the Dean's Walk to the slopes. All was sweet in the soft darkness and in the evening dews, the grass moist, the trees or the sky sometimes distilling a palpable dew-drop, the air coming softly over all those miles of country to touch with the tenderest salutation Lottie's cheek. She looked out upon the little town nestling at the foot of the hill with all its twinkling lights, and upon the stars that shone over the long glimmer of the river, which showed here and there, through all the valley, pale openings of light in the dark country. How sweet and still it was! The openness of the horizon, the distance, was the thing that did Lottie good. She cast her eyes to the very farthest limit of the world that lay within her sight, and drew a long breath. Perhaps it was this that caught the attention of some one who was passing. Lottie had seated herself in a corner under a tree, and she did not see this wayfarer, who was behind her; and the reader knows that she did not sigh for sorrow, but only to relieve a bosom which was very full of fanciful anticipations, hopes, and dreams. It was not likely, however, that Mr. Ashford would know that. He too was taking his evening walk; and when he heard the sigh in which so many tender and delicious fancies exhaled into the air, he thought—who could wonder?—that it was somebody in trouble; and drawing a little nearer to see if he could help, as was the nature of the man, found to his great surprise—as she, too, startled, turned round her face upon him—that it was Lottie Despard who was occupying the seat which was his favourite seat also. They both said "I beg your pardon" simultaneously, though it would be hard to tell why.

"I think I have seen you here before," he said. "You like this time of the evening, Miss Despard, like myself—and this view."

"Yes," said Lottie; "but I have been sitting indoors all the after-

noon, and got tired of it at last. I did not like to come out all by my self; but I thought no one would see me now."

"Surely you may come here in all safety by yourself." The Minor Canon had too much good breeding to suggest any need of a companion, or any pity for the girl left alone. Then he said suddenly, "This is an admirable chance for me. The first time we met, Miss Despard, you mentioned something about which you wished to consult me——"

"Ah!" cried Lottie, coming back out of her dreams. Yes, she had wanted to consult him, and the opportunity must not be neglected. "It was about Law, Mr. Ashford. Law—his name is Lawrence, you know, my brother; he is a great boy, almost a man—more than eighteen. But I am afraid he is very backward. I want him so very much to stand his examination. It seems that nothing—nothing can be done without that now."

"His examination—for what?"

"Oh, Mr. Ashford," said Lottie, "for anything! I don't mind what it is. I thought, perhaps, if you would take him it would make him see the good of working. We are—poor; I need not make any fuss about saying that; here we are all poor; and if I could but see Law in an office earning his living, I think," cried Lottie, with the solemnity of a martyr, "I think I should not care what happened. That was all. I wanted him to come to you, that you might tell us what he would be fit for."

"He would make a good soldier," said Mr. Ashford, smiling; "though there is an examination for that too."

"There are examinations for everything, I think," said Lottie, shaking her head mournfully; "that is the dreadful thing; and you see, Mr. Ashford, we are poor. He has not a penny, he must work for his living, and how is he to get started? That is what I am always saying. But what is the use of speaking? You know what boys are. Perhaps if I had been able to insist upon it years ago—but then I was very young too. I had no sense, any more than Law."

The Minor Canon was greatly touched. The evening dew got into his eyes—he stood by her in the soft summer darkness, wondering. He was a great deal older than Lottie—old enough to be her father, he said to himself; but he had no one to give him this keen impatient anxiety, this insight into what boys are. "Was there no one but you to insist upon it?" he said, in spite of himself.

"Well," said Lottie meditatively, "do gentlemen—generally—take much trouble about what boys are doing? I suppose—they have got other things to think of."

"You have not much opinion of men, Miss Despard," said the Minor Canon, with a half laugh.

"Oh, indeed I have!" cried Lottie; "why do you say that? I was not thinking about men—but only—— And then boys themselves, Mr. Ashford; you know what they are. Oh! I think sometimes if I could put some of me into him. But you can't do that. You may talk and

you may coax, and you may scold, and try every way—but what does it matter? If a boy won't do anything, what is to be done with him? That is why I wanted so much, so very much, to bring him to you."

"Miss Despard," said the Minor Canon, "you may trust me that if there is anything I can do for him I will do it. As it happens, I am precisely in want of some one to—to do the same work as another pupil I have. That would be no additional trouble to me, and would not cost anything. Don't you see? Let him come to me to-morrow and begin."

"Oh, Mr. Ashford," said Lottie, "I knew by your face you were kind—but how very, very good you are! But then," she added, sorrowfully, "most likely he could not do the same work as your other pupil. I am afraid he is very backward. If I were to tell you what he is doing you might know. He is reading Virgil—a book about as big as himself," she said, with a little laugh, that was very near crying. "Won't you sit down here?"

"Virgil is precisely the book my other pupil is doing," said Mr. Ashford, laughing too, very tenderly, at her small joke, poor child! while she made room for him anxiously on the bench. There they sat together for a minute in silence, all alone, as it might be, in the world, nothing but darkness round them, faint streaks of light upon the horizon, distant twinkles of stars above and homely lamps below. The man's heart softened strangely within him over this creature, who for all the pleasure she had, came out here, and apologised to him for coming alone. She who, neglected by everybody, had it in her to push forward the big lout of a brother into worthy life, putting all her delicate strength to that labour of Hercules—he felt himself getting quite foolish, moved beyond all his experiences of emotion, as, at her eager invitation, he sat down there by her side.

And as he did so, other voices and steps became audible among the trees, of somebody coming that way. Lottie had turned to him, and was about to say something, when the sound of the approaching voices reached them. He could see her start—then draw herself erect, close into the corner of the bench. The voices were loudly pitched, and attempted no concealment.

"La, Captain, how dark it is! Let's go home; mother will be looking for us," said one.

"My dear Polly," said the other—and though Mr. Ashford did not know Captain Despard, he divined the whole story in a moment as the pair brushed past arm-in-arm—"my dear Polly, your home will be very close at hand next time I bring you here."

Lottie said nothing—her heart jumped up into her throat, beating so violently that she could not speak. And to the Minor Canon the whole family story seemed to roll out like the veiled landscape before him as he looked compassionately at the girl sitting speechless by his side, while her father and his companion, all unconscious in the darkness, brushed against her, sitting there unseen under the shadowy trees.

Malay Life in the Philippines.

IMPATIENT to be already at the term of his voyage, the homeward-bound passenger is generally, nor least so at the hurried moment of final parting, under a spell that blots out from the scroll of his "Pleasures of Memory" the records of whole years, it may be, of happy residence in the lands that he is leaving; and all by the fresh contrast of lively anticipation of what, too often in fancy only, awaits him in the land, his native home, that lies before. True it is also that some shores there are—though to specify such would be invidious—which the longer one has sojourned on them, the keener the satisfaction one feels on leaving them without thought of return. Not so the "Isles of the East," the Philippines. Dull indeed must be his soul, unsympathetic his nature, who, whatever the hopes that may smile on him from the further vista of his journey's end, can stand as I do now on the deck of the Singapore-ward steamer, the little *Leite*, and see the forests and mountains of Luzon, Queen of the Eastern Isles, fade away into dim violet outlines on the fast receding horizon, without some wishful remembrance, some pang of longing regret.

It is not only that Nature—or shall we say "Hertha?"—so niggard often of her gifts, has here lavished them rather than bestowed; though indeed not the Ægæan, not the West-Indian, not the Samoan, not any other of the fair island-clusters by which our terraqueous planet half atones for her dreary expanses of grey ocean and monotonous desert elsewhere, can rival in manifold beauties of earth, sea, sky, the Philippine Archipelago from the extreme northern verge of the Formosan channel to where the tepid equatorial wave sinks faint on the coral-reefs of Borneo; nor in all that Archipelago, lovely as it is through its entire extent, can any island vie with the glories of Luzon. Set out eastwards from Manila, the tropical Venice amid her labyrinth of estuaries and canals, daily ebbing and flowing to the tides of the vast harbour-gulf, the secure vestibule of the typhoon-swept China seas; thence pass inland between the broad shades of clustered bamboo and palm up the eddying Pasig river to where, apt starting-point of its romantic course, it issues from the wide freshwater lake of Baï, girdled by a hundred miles and more of varied, ever-fertile shore-line, and the cloud-capped peaks of the giant Mahahai range beyond; traverse the yellow cane-fields of the wealthy Laguna district to where, hid among the hills and coffee-groves of Batangas lies deep the blue cliff-encircled lake of Taal, and amid its waters the fairy islet where, from the miniature central volcano, a shift-

ing pennon of restless smoke and fire ever rises and spreads high over greensward and glossy tree; then across the rushing rivers, sounding waterfalls, and dark woods of Tayabas and the mid-chain, till, between slim tree-fern, and over forest-clad descent, the boundless Pacific opens out its sparkling blue; and right from the very breakers on the shore towers eight thousand feet in air the perfect volcano-cone of Albay, the fire-breathing marvel of these islands, as Fusihama of Japan.

I have taken, almost at chance, the first route that offered; Luzon has a hundred more, each different, and each as fair. Nor inferior in intrinsic beauty, though on a smaller scale, are the scenes that the comparatively lesser islands, such as Panay, Cebu, Samar, Negros, Leite, and others of names strange to the generality of European ears, have to show. More fortunate than their West-Indian sisters, no flat and chalky Barbados, no drought-stricken Antigua, no barren Virgin Island mars the perfection of the Philippine group; while Jamaica and Antigua themselves, those loveliest of the Antilles, must yield the palm of beauty to the mere average of the "Eastern Isles." Volcanic formation and soil, an abundant yearly rainfall, an equable climate, and the life-giving influences of the oceanic tropics have all combined here to do this, and it is marvellous in our, the beholders', eyes.

Marvellous in our eyes, impossible, not to be imaged, in the eyes of those who have only word-painting and imagination out of which to construct the view. Tropical scenery, be it of mountain or plain, forest or coast-line, lake or river, can no more be realised by those who have never seen it than colours by the blind, music by the deaf. A Kingsley attempts the picture, and behold a confused description of a Kew palm-house; a Michael Scott, and lo! the side-scenes of a theatre. The scientific accuracy of a Wallace, and of his compeers, if there be any worthy of the name, may supply a correct outline; but even this must be filled up by remembrance, or supplemented by engraving. Pity that for the Philippines themselves no word-limner of note exists, to my knowledge at least, except the coarse, narrow-souled Jagor, of whose book, or libel rather, it is enough to say that the letter-press and the sketches are worthy of each other, and each not likenesses but caricatures. The want however is one that, for the time at least, must remain unfulfilled; the subject, even were it accessible to my grasp, does not come within the scope of a writing like the present.

For, when all is said and done, the prime history of a country lies not in the land itself but in the inhabitants of the land; where they are unworthy of the beauties around them, the fairest scenery fails to charm; as, on the contrary, a noble people can cast a glamour of attractiveness over the dullest landscape. The barren rocks of Attica, the dreary plains of Rome, nay, the unsightly marshes of Holland are loved for their hero-children, while the gorgeous panoramas of Rio and Valparaiso, Yosemite gorges and Niagara chiefly suggest a feeling of dissatisfaction with the unequal inferiority of their vanished autochthones, or

present occupants. The chiefest, the almost exceptional spell of the Philippines is situate, not in lake or volcano, forest or plain, but in the races that form the bulk of the island population, the "Indians" as Spanish guilelessness of ethnography persists in misnaming them, the Malays of descent and fact.

I said "almost exceptional," because rarely is an intra-tropical people a satisfactory one to eye or mind; witness the average negro of Western Africa, the Carib of Southern America, the Sinhalee of Ceylon. Extreme heat, as extreme cold, are both, though in different ways, generally unfavourable to a successful development, physical or intellectual, of the human species. But this cannot be said of the Philippine Malays, who in bodily formation and mental characteristics alike may fairly claim a place not among the middling ones merely but almost the higher names inscribed on the world's national scale; and though not exactly a superior are eminently an estimable, pre-eminently an amiable race.

Of the Spaniards, the conquerors and administrators of this great Archipelago, in which however not ten thousand of their number have even a passing residence throughout its whole extent, of the English, an honourable, and in numbers as in wealth a not inconsiderable body, of the more numerous nor unimportant Chinese settlers domiciled here, and of that curious aboriginal remnant, the "Negritos," savages akin, it would seem, to the natives of Andaman, and like them shrinking, perhaps with prudential self-preserving instinct, from the contact of the "nobler," at any rate the stronger, races, no direct notice shall be taken here. Indeed of the eight millions, so runs the exactest though only approximate census, that inhabit the Philippines, Europeans, Chinese, all foreigners whosoever taken together, do not make up a hundredth part; nor do the thinly scattered and unprolific Negritos add much to the extra-Malayan muster. Nor again, in a general sketch like this, do the varieties offered by the Philippino-Malayan population within itself require more than a passing indication. The chief are three, which correspond with tolerable geographical exactness to a triple division of the Archipelago into Northern, Central, and Southern. Thus, the Ilocan Malays occupy the North, the Tagals the centre, and the Visaians the south. Of these three sub-races, the first-named are the largest and sturdiest in physical build, but of lower mental average and less general adaptability than the two others; the second, a smaller-statured, darker-complexioned, and sinewy race, are distinguished above all others for energy of character, intelligence, and perseverance; the Visaians, graceful even to beauty in form and gentle in manner, differ little in natural capacity and endowments from the better sort of their congeners in Borneo. Derived from or ingrafted on these three main branches are many lesser sprays. Some, especially in North and Central Luzon, owe their differentiation, if reliance can be placed on the testimony of bodily lineaments and historical evidence combined, to a strong infusion of

Chinese, Formosan, and even Japanese blood; others, the Bicols for instance on the eastern shores of the island, display an evidently Polynesian or Papuan admixture; while in the huge southerly island of Mindanao, scarcely inferior to Luzon itself in dimensions, a population closely resembling the Dyaks of Borneo is reported to exist. But the persistent, strongly-marked Malay type, whether absolutely pure as among the Visaians, or dashed with foreign strain, here more, here less, as is the case among the Tagals, Ilocans, and their sub-branches, predominates in all.

Once recognised, that type can never be mistaken; and it alone would, even in the absence of other testimony, suffice to assert the Mongolian clanship of the Malay. The rounded head, the small but expressive black eye, with its slight upward and outward turn, the straight dark hair, smooth skin, and small extremities, hands and feet, are not less distinctly the physical countersigns of Turanian origin, than are the tenacious purpose, the organising and yet more the cohesive power, the limited inventiveness, and the more than conservative immutability, its mental characteristics. Add to these a concentrated, never-absent self-respect, with—its natural result—a habitual self-restraint in word and deed, then only, and that very rarely, broken through when extreme provocation induces the transitory but fatal frenzy known as "amok," and in one deadly hour the Malay casts to the winds every feeling, every thought except that of bloody, indiscriminating revenge; add an inbred courtesy, equably diffused through all classes low or high, unfailing decorum, prudence, caution, quiet cheerfulness, ready hospitality, a correct though not an inventive taste, and a marked tendency to ancestral worship: such are, as described by the keenest of observers and most truthful of narrators, in his *Malay Archipelago*, the general attributes of the Malay race; and such are abundantly shared in by the inhabitants of the Philippines, though here they have undergone certain modifications, some favourable, some the reverse.

These modifications are, as might be anticipated, due principally to two important circumstances, the one, that the Philippine Malays have for now three full centuries been subject to European, *i.e.*, Spanish rule; the second, that they have for an equal length of time followed the religion of their conquerors, the Roman Catholic form of Christianity. Other things, climate, trade, wars, immigrations, and the like have no doubt had their effect, but in subordinate measure; the climate differing little from that of the not distant Equatorial islands and peninsula, while the isolated and isolating character of Spanish colonial policy has left comparatively little play to the action of trade or war; immigration has been considered already.

How far then has Malay nationality submitted to be modified by Spanish influence and institutions, how far has it, instinctively or deliberately, declined them? A visit to any one of the large villages or "pueblos" in the populous provinces of Pampangas, Laguna, or Batan-

gas, all of them within easy reach of the Government centre, Manila, will best help us to decide.

It is the morning—needless to say in a climate like this a clear and bright one—of the village patronal "Fiesta;" each village from Taal, with its sixty thousand inhabitants, down to the smallest hamlet of half a dozen families, has its "Fiesta," one at least, not rarely two, in the course of the year, over and above the stated holiday-making of Sundays and the many other days marked for idleness and pleasure in the Philippine calendar. The open space, corresponding to our own village green, and here always in front of the church, is thronged with people, men, women, and children; while a number of the light native-constructed jaunting-cars, or "caramatas," not unlike our own market carts, but canopied, and of slighter build, that have brought hither the more distant sharers in the day's festivity, are waiting beside by scores, jumbled up with wickerwork waggons, wheel-less bamboo trucks, and two or three shabby open carriages of European construction, in which some wealthier native, or "mestizo," *i.e.*, half-caste, family has arrived, in careless confusion.

A word about these "mestizos." Not often the result of Spanish intermarriage, they are very commonly of semi-Chinese origin; a complexion fairer than the average, a greater breadth of forehead and feature, and a marked tendency to obesity, are their most ordinary distinctive marks. Intellectually they are generally somewhat the superiors of the unmixed natives around them. Their number, taken in comparison with that of the entire population, is not great; but their wealth and influence go far to make up this deficiency. I return to the Malays proper.

Thickly grouped before the church porch and around the building the men, lithe, middle-sized, and ruddy-brown of various shades, are dressed, if of the better sort, in loose shirts or blouses, home-manufactured from the finest fibre of the "abaca," or Manila hemp, as the plant (really a sterile variety of the ordinary fruit-bearing banana) is called; or, more delicate yet, from "piña," the pine-apple leaf texture, airy as the choicest lace, the peculiar workmanship of the Philippines. White, or light yellow, and interwoven sometimes with flower-patterns, more generally with brilliant stripes of Chinese silk, red, yellow, green, or blue, the "baro," or blouse, is an essentially national dress, though in the neighbourhood of Manila modified too often into an uncouth resemblance of a European shirt. Beneath it a pair of white or light-coloured trousers are belted round the waist; the feet, usually bare, or protected by sandals at most, are on occasions like this not seldom encased in patent-leather boots of Spanish fashion; the head is protected by the "salacot," a round, mushroom-like hat, of about a foot in diameter, close plaited in gray and black intersecting patterns of tough "nito" or liana fibre; the circumference tastefully ornamented with silver bands and flowerets, an excellent and picturesque sunshade, ill exchanged, though, happily,

but seldom, for the European hat of silk or straw. The poorer classes wear a like dress, but of coarser materials, in which red or orange commonly predominate, and on the head a "salacot" devoid of ornament. But while the men's attire, though national in the main, shows occasional tokens of European influence, the women, with wise conservatism, retain their graceful Malay costume unaltered as of old. Wrapped in the many-coloured folds of the silken "saya," or "sarong," and over it a second, but narrower, waistcloth, also of silk, reaching down to the knees, and dark in hue; her breast and shoulders covered with delicate "piña" texture, while the matchless abundance of her raven hair ripples from under a white snooded kerchief far down her back, not seldom to her very heels, a Malay woman could hardly, even did she wish it, improve on the toilette bequeathed by her ancestors. Silver or gold ornaments are not much in feminine use. It is true that the Malay type of face is generally too flat for regular beauty, and the eye, though larger than the Chinese, is seldom full-sized; but many of the younger women are decidedly pretty, a few lovely, and a habitual look of smiling good-nature goes far to render pleasing the less nature-favoured faces. Their complexion is a clear brown, sometimes hardly darker than that of an ordinary South European brunette. Children, absolutely naked, or with a light and scanty shirt for sole covering, mix fearlessly but quietly in the throng; early trained by precept and example to good manners, they show less disposition to noise and mischief than is ordinary elsewhere at their age.

Such are the festival-makers. The church-buildings, including a spacious presbytery, are generally the design and construction of the parish priest himself, who has in them maintained a traditional adaptation of the "renaissance" style of his own Spanish peninsula. The frequency of earthquakes in this volcanic region counsels low side walls, flanked by ponderous buttresses; a massive octangular bell-tower, with indications of good taste and architectural feeling in its proportions and details, is usually the best feature of the whole.

Within the church the rites and ceremonies of the day—a Malay sermon delivered by one or other of the officiating priests excepted—are much what they might be in any small provincial town of Spain itself. But the music, contributed by a native brass band, is not European merely, but, the most of it, operatic. The "Gloria" is accompanied by an inspiriting air of the "Trovatore," the "Credo" cheered by a melodious adaptation from the "Barbiere," and the host elevated to a passionate outburst of the "Traviata." But whatever may be thought of the suitableness of the music to the occasion and place, it meets beyond a doubt all the æsthetic requirements of the worshippers, and is well executed besides. Not a village of any importance throughout the length and breadth of the Philippines but has its band of carefully selected and expensive brass instruments, and skilled players to match; for, next to his fighting-cock, of which more anon, music is the dearest

solace of the Philippine Malay; and the ex-bandmasters of the numerous native regiments here maintained by the Spaniards are always ready to hire out their services as professors of the art wherever wanted. Of the original native music, prior in date to the Spanish conquest, little now remains; its connection with an older Paganism, perhaps patriotism, having caused it to be proscribed and carefully put down by the later clergy; two such airs I had however a chance opportunity of hearing; they were of a sentimental and somewhat pathetic character.

Inside and without the church decorations testify to Mariolatry, Hagiolatry, and the entire system habitually branded by those who wish to give it a bad name as "idolatry," "man-worship," "creature-worship," and the like, here carried out to its extremest limits, and constituting in practice nine-tenths, or rather more, of the religion of the land. It is a religion admirably adapted to the requirements of the people, and proportionately beneficial. Ancestor-worship in one form or other has ever been, as Mr. Fergusson correctly remarks, and yet is, the favourite expression of religious feeling among Turanian races; and the Malays, themselves the southmost branch of the great ethnical tree, are no exceptions to the rule. Here in the Philippines they have, with the easy pliancy in such matters that once covered the equatorial island-group with Brahminical temples, and facilitated the spread of Buddhism among their cousins of China and Japan, adopted without questioning the Catholic-Christian system, and placed its mythico-historical virgins, saints, and martyrs at the head of the unseen kingdom already tenanted by their own proper ancestors and relatives, till they now rejoice in the possession of a well-stocked Olympian Valhalla, sufficient to their sympathies and hopes. Engrafted thus on a genuine indigenous stem, the more recent and exotic religion, while retaining much of its own peculiar form in flower and fruit, derives its local energy and development from the unfailing sap of the national mind; no longer foreign but native, believed in sooner than taught, an integral part of daily life, not a plastered-on addition, it affords so far an absolute contrast to the "musical bank currency" of the Erewhons of our age, and is itself a not inconsiderable part of the genuine circulating medium of the Philippines. Hence as a social bond, a humanising influence, an effective sanction, a promoter of friendly intercourse, of right, of love even, a poetry amid life's commonplace, a balm—ideal but not inefficacious—of the wounds and bruises of fact, Christianity has, it would seem, rarely been more advantageous to its followers than here, where it can scarce be distinguished from a well-regulated, genial Asiatic Paganism; a riddle harder to read in appearance than in reality.

This is not the place for me to enter on the perilous field of the strange abnormal practices and beliefs, survivals of a far older creed, that subsist and smoulder on throughout the Archipelago, and even within the immediate neighbourhood of Manila itself, its convents and cathedral, beneath the Christianised surface, though rarely obtruding themselves

on European observation: Cybelian priesthoods, Cotyttian rites, repressed but not obliterated, and to which the past history of other nations, perhaps the present, offers many a parallel. Enough that such things are; their investigation, though of deep anthropological interest, is foreign to my present scope, which extends only over the usual, not the exceptional, the recognised, not the concealed and disavowed phases of Philippine society and life.

Mass is ended; the "Royal March" of Spanish celebrity has dismissed the congregation; and while we stand a little apart and watch the bright-coloured crowds issuing dense but orderly from the church portal, the native "Gubernadorcillo," or "Capitan," the Headman of the village community, observes and approaches us. The ensigns of his office are few, and those chiefly Spanish; a short jacket of black cloth, worn, unbecomingly enough, over the indispensable blouse, a thin staff tipped with silver or gold, sometimes—though, heaven be praised, rarely—a European hat, distinguish the great man. Probably he himself is forty years old or more, but his general appearance, features, form, and bearing, would designate him at first sight for a lad of barely twenty; and indeed the closest inspection may not rarely fail in determining his real age. This extraordinary semblance of juvenility, prolonged far into middle life, is not merely due to the beardless face, where a slight mustachio is commonly enough the only hair-growth even in advanced life, but more to the smooth, smiling, unworn features, where neither care nor passion seem to have left a trace, and partly to the uprightness of stature and well-proportioned roundness of limb maintained to the very confines of senility—a fitting exterior to the calm, unexcitable, moderated character within, and not unparalleled among the Chinese, Japanese, and other Turanian tribes. It is almost a pity that early and frequently recurring maternity too generally deprives—though not uncompensating in its kind for what it takes—the Malay women of a physical advantage more to the purpose in their sex than in the male.

Every village, large or small, is headed by its "Capitan," a native of the place or district, elected in accordance with immemorial custom for two years' office by the villagers themselves, subject, of course, to the approbation, seldom withheld, of the "Alcalde," or Spanish Provincial Governor. For the Spaniards wisely enough preferred at their conquest to maintain and continue in most matters of detail the already existing village, or "Barangai" organisation, rather than to supersede it by novel systems of their own; a matter in which they showed themselves to be better colonisers than, for instance, the French. But the post of "Capitan," however important, is scarcely an object of rural ambition, as its responsibilities are at least equal to its dignity; while the expenses which custom or duty has rendered obligatory on its holder are too often in excess of its emoluments, legal or not. Hence the not unfrequent "nolo episcopari"—that is, its Tagal equivalent—of a newly elected "Capitan."

Of even higher authority in every village than the "Capitan" himself is the "Cura," or parish priest. He is in most instances a Spaniard by birth, and enrolled in one or other of the three great religious orders, Augustinian, Franciscan, or Dominican, established by the conquerors in these islands. But his birthplace, complexion, and habit apart, he is ordinarily as much, sometimes in a manner more, of a native in his sympathies and turn of mind than the natives themselves. This is quite natural. Bound for life to the land of his adoption, with no social, no domestic tie, no anticipated home-return to hold him back from identifying himself with those amongst whom his days are henceforth to be passed, his bones at last to rest, having every interest, the highest as the lowest, in common with the sheep of his pasture, whose fleeces he cannot but desire to guard against all other shears but his own—and, to do him justice, his own do not shear very close—he commonly becomes, and that in the truest and best sense of the term, a very father to his people, and finds in their reverence and affection motive enough to encourage him in continuing to deserve the title. To clerical government, paradoxical as the statement may sound in modern European ears, the Philippine islands owe, more than to anything else, their internal prosperity, the Malay population its sufficiency and happiness. This it is that again and again has stood a barrier of mercy and justice between the weaker and the stronger race, the vanquished and the victor; this has been the steady protector of the native inhabitants, this their faithful benefactor, their sufficient leader and guide. With the "Cura" for father, and the "Capitan" for his adjutant, a Philippine hamlet feels and knows little of the vexations inseparable from direct and foreign official administration; and if under such a rule "progress," as we love to term it, be rare, disaffection and want are rarer still.

Occasionally the "Cura" is a native by birth, for though excluded by invariable custom and monastic disciplinarianisn from the "regular," Malays are admitted readily enough into the ranks of the "secular" priesthood. But, while pointedly rejecting as the figments of a malevolent imagination the calumnies of Jagor and his like against the morals of the Philippine clergy in general, and the native portion of it in particular, I must admit that the results of Malay ordination are seldom as satisfactory as could be desired. The Malays have, in their authentic condition, no regular priesthood, as we understand the word, of their own, nor is their temperament suited to it. The office is accordingly best filled among them by foreigners, such at least as religious orders and monasticism, nor least those of the Spanish type, can supply.

But we have almost forgotten our "Capitan," who, with genuine Malay courtesy and self-restraint, has been all this while awaiting in silence and respectful expectation the opportunity of addressing us. This he now does, placing his house at our disposal for the day, and pressingly inviting us to take share in the promised festivities of the evening. Knowing as we do that the house he so liberally offers us will be

crowded with visitants of all kinds, on ceremonious compliments or indirect business, we decline the first half of his offer, and request for ourselves some quieter shelter till the evening hour. He complies, and passes us over to one of his wealthier friends, who immediately proceeds to take on himself the duties of host, by vacating in our favour all the best rooms of his own abode, and converting himself and his family into extemporised cooks and servants during our stay.

The house, though ranged in what constitutes the main street of the village, stands by itself; no Malay who can possibly avoid it ever constructing his home in immediate contact with that of another family. The garden which surrounds it, fenced in with wattle, and thick-set with dragon's-blood plants, purple-blossomed creepers, red coral-plants, and white star-like flowerets, makes a pretty show; betel-palms and giant bananas shade the enclosure. Raised on thick pieces of stone or wood to a height of six or eight feet from the ground, the house enjoys an almost free circulation of the outside air beneath its inhabited apartments on the first floor; an arrangement which may possibly be a survival of lacustrine constructions and delta-inhabiting ancestors, but which, now observed throughout the Philippines in the driest up-country heights not less than among the dampest marsh-lands, contributes not a little to popular cleanliness and health. The house itself, that is, the upper story, is entered by a wide staircase leading into a broad sort of open passage, called the "cahida," facing the street; its windows are composed of small square panes of thin mother-of-pearl, produce of the Sooloo seas, arranged in lattice-work horizontally or diagonally; in this cool verandah-like passage the family usually enjoy their leisure, receive visitors, and exchange gossip with the neighbours. Behind it is a large square central room, all doors and windows, the latter also of mother-of-pearl in sliding frames; here are massed together the costliest articles of furniture owned by the household—chairs, tables, wardrobes, and the rest. As might be expected of a people whose principal constructive material is wood, the Malays display considerable skill and taste in carved work: even the outside decorations round and between the windows and along the string-courses of their buildings are often of much beauty; while indoors their cabinets and sideboards, well-proportioned and elaborately intricate in decorative finish, might not rarely furnish models to be copied or envied by the upholsterers of Europe. The narrow interspaces along the walls of the principal room are decorated with coloured prints, generally Spanish, devotional or historical, as the case may be; and not rarely boast of family portraits, executed by native artists, with all the detail accuracy and all the stiffness and want of perspective that a Chinese could accomplish. Glass globes, red and blue, mixed with gay lamps, and perhaps a European chandelier, hang from the ceiling, and a small tinsel-decorated altar or oratory, the Penates of the family, commonly occupies a corner of the apartment. The doors around open into bedrooms, and a bamboo-made passage leads

off to the bathroom and kitchen, which is also on the first floor, but at a little distance from the rest of the house.

Abundance of light, though tempered by the semi-opacity of the pearl-shell windows, plenty of fresh air, as much bright colour and ornament as can be had, and scrupulous cleanliness, the broad floor planks being daily scrubbed with plantain-leaves to a mirror-like polish, and everything dusted twice in the day, such are the chief characteristics of the interior of a Malayo-Philippine house; and amid conditions of the sort, the general health and longevity of the inhabitants cease to surprise. Outside, the appearance of the many-gabled palm-thatched roofs at every variety of pitch, the widely projecting eaves, the bamboo-interlacements, and carved timber-work of the walls, the chequered panes and little balconies here and there, is very picturesque, and has a kind of Swiss-cottage look that harmonises well with the local background of hill and forest.

I pass over the ceremonies of reception, and the hospitality that follows; both are in the main identical with those practised elsewhere in the non-Europeanised East, with the difference that here the women of the house take a more prominent part in welcome and entertainment than is customary in Syria, Arabia, or Western Asia generally. When not under Mahometan influences, Malays draw the line of demarcation between the sexes but slightly; and Christianity naturally tends to efface rather than to deepen the division. To this circumstance, more perhaps than to any other, I am inclined to attribute the manifest superiority in mind, and even in body, of the average Philippine Malay over his Mahometan kinsmen, as the latter are found in Sumatra, the Peninsula, the Sooloo Archipelago, and adjoining regions.

That the adoption of Islam may be, and in fact is, a real benefit and an uplifting to savage tribes, amongst whom the lowest and most brutalising forms of fetichism would else predominate, does not admit of doubt. Anthropophagy, human sacrifices, and other kindred horrors, have thus been banished by Mahometan teaching from whole tracts of Africa; and so far is well. But not less does experience show that, sooner or later, the tribe, the nation that casts in its lot with Islam, is stricken as by a blight; its freshness, its plasticity disappear first, then its vigour, then its reparative and reproductive power, and it petrifies or perishes. With the abstract and theoretical merits of Monotheism or Polytheism, Islam or Christianity, I have nothing to do; but this much is certain, that within the circle of the Philippine Archipelago itself—not to seek examples further away—the contrast between the Mahometan villages of the southernmost islands and the Christian ones elsewhere, is very remarkable, nor by any means favourable to the former.

For a satisfactory explanation of the problem before us, there is no need for recurring to causes, if such there be, hid in the extra-mundane and unknown. The reason is near to seek. Family life, family ties, family affections, these form the only true, stable, and at the same time

expansive basis for communities, states, empires even; and that these may, and actually do, co-exist after a fashion with a vigorous profession of Mahometanism no one who has experimental knowledge of Turkish or Arab populations can possibly deny. They exist; but even when at their best and strongest are always cramped, stunted, and hindered their full growth and development by the forced demarcation between the sexes, the sanctioned polygamy, the over-facility of divorce, and the other social mistakes interwoven whether by the hand of the Prophet himself, or rather, as with Sprengel I incline to believe, by that of the narrow-minded and ascetic Omar, into the very texture of Islam. Nowhere are family bonds closer drawn, family affections more enduring than among the Malay races, and nowhere, in consequence, is whatever weakens or distorts them more injurious. Hence a Malay Mahometan is a contradiction, an anomaly, a failure, much as a Hindoo Christian or a European Buddhist might be. The system does not suit him, nor he the system. Not so the Malay of the Philippino-Christian type. His family, as that of his Chinese or Japanese cousins, moderate polytheists like himself, is a pleasing sight, much subordination and little constraint, unison in gradation, liberty not licence. Orderly children, respected parents, women subject but not suppressed, men ruling but not despotic, reverence with kindness, obedience in affection, these form a loveable picture, nor by any means a rare one in the villages of the Eastern Isles.

Our mid-day meal, the components of which differ little from those of a West Indian or a Bombay up-country *menu*, with cookery to match, is over. Follows, for those who desire it, a dreamy half-siesta of cigars and the green coolness of rustling bamboo-sprays outside the window, with glimpses of a shining river and light outrigger canoes gliding over it just seen betwixt the leaves; a purple volcano-peak and a faint blue mountain range beyond. And now the white perpendicular glare of noon is slanting into mellowness, and we stroll out of doors for a survey of the village, keeping whenever we can under the shade of the thick-planted garden trees, mango, palm, orange, lanzon, santol, medlar, fifty more, each with its own peculiar foliage and fruit, pleasant to the eye and good to eat, a survival of Eden. The villagers' houses, some large, some small, wood or bamboo, two-storied or one, mere huts or spacious dwellings, according to the fortunes of the inmates, are jotted here and there in an unsymmetrical row among the trees with utter disregard of proportionate dimensions; but all have a comfortable, a cosy look, suggestive of sufficiency; many of them, white painted with stripes green or blue, rarely red, and occasionally a flower pattern or fanciful scroll-work to enliven them more, show an attempt at decoration; others are content with the pale yellow of the split and interlaced bamboo that forms their walls; the roofing is grey palm-thatch. On this festival-day lamps are placed ready for lighting at every window, and over every doorway, flower-garlands hang between, and frequent arches of cane, festooned with white or red cloth, and hung with lanterns of more colours

than Joseph's coat, span the road. We have left behind us the white church and "convents," the Capitan's many-windowed house, the guard-station, where a couple of brown young policemen, natives, of course, but attired in Spanish military uniform, languidly keep what courtesy may name watch, and now we have before us a large wattled building, surrounded by a wide enclosure, and with extensive galleries in front and on the sides; the central thatch roof towers dome-like above the rest. Several natives clad, for the day is yet hot, in the gauziest and most transparent of hemp blouses, or absolutely naked to the waist, are entering the crowded gate-way, others are issuing from it, like bees about the mouth of a hive; all is animation, almost—so far as the word is compatible with Malay composure—excitement. It is the village cock-pit, the great afternoon resort of Sundays and holidays as observed throughout this entire region of the world, from Penang to the confines of New Guinea; in the Philippines most of all.

Whether the Malays, as some writers assert, learnt cock-fighting from the Spaniards, or the Spaniards, as others opine, from the Malays, I will not attempt to decide, the historical problem is too complicated. But from whichever the origin of the sport, it is certain that the zeal for it that nowadays glows in every native breast from Luzon to Mindanao, let alone the rest of Malaysia, is such as might rejoice the soul of a Windham himself. Rich or poor, it would be hard to find a Malay householder, Ilocan, Tagal, Visaian, or whatever his tribe and island in the great Spain-governed Archipelago, who does not rear at least as many fighting-cocks as his means permit, and too often rather more; nor is it wholly a calumny which asserts that the owner is wont to tend his bird better and love it dearer than any other living object of his household belongings, wife and children not excepted. Stories are current of a respectable Malay paterfamilias escaping from amid the ruins of his burning home—no rare occurrence in these villages of wood and thatch, especially during the dry season—and bearing carefully shielded in his arms his favourite, scarce-rescued bird, while his wife and children are left behind to shift for themselves unheeded as best they may. Exaggerations, I am bound to say, but, I also fear, "founded on fact."

We enter the precincts—the admission fee is a mere trifle, and a cheap cigar, if no coin be at hand, is current payment for this and for many other minor costs, to see the sport. It has been often described; the chief thing worthy of remark is that a heel of either fighting bird is armed with a sharp razor-like steel blade, near two inches in length; a deadly weapon, that materially abridges the duration of the combat between the feathered rivals. Once at close quarters, the rest is an affair of seconds rather than of minutes; at least I never saw it otherwise. It is a somewhat brutal amusement after all, and so far lowers the Malays to the level of our own ancestors some three or four generations ago. But the really worst picture of a Philippine cock-fight is the betting universal among the spectators of the game; the sums staked are often

very high, and their payment, which is rarely shirked, not uncommonly involves the ruin of the loser. Thus the cock-pit too frequently proves the first step in an Avernian descent leading down to prison and crime. Here we have in truth before us the Malay "turf," though Malay civilisation has not yet widened enough to include within its circle "welchers" and their kin, nor, I think, ever will. Self-respect, a feeling hardly ever absent from the national character, would alone suffice to forbid it. The same self-respect displays itself too, even on occasions like the present, when, if ever, it might be supposed weak or wanting, in other ways. Look round the crowded circles, where several hundreds of half-naked spectators of every age are close packed together in the broiling afternoon heat, and acted on by all the combined influences of gambling, emulation, and the sport itself; not a word, not a sound is to be heard, not a gesture to be seen approaching to "rowdyism;" not a hint of disorder or disturbance. Passions, strong ones too, certainly, are at work; vice in many forms can hardly fail to be present and busy in gatherings of the kind; but no vulgarity, no visible or audible coarseness are there. This is partly due to the comparative absence of intoxication; for "tuba," the fermented palm-juice that does almost universal duty for beer or spirits among the Philippine "natives," is rarely drunk in excess, and even were it, could hardly prove more effective than, in Dr. Johnson's estimation, claret itself. But the chief order preserver is the stable equilibrium of the native mind, the decorum born of moderation. A Malay may be a profligate, a gambler, a thief, a robber, a murderer; he is never a "cad;" that type, as well as the "rough"—the death-bed abhorrence of the great Queen of England's Renaissance—is a development of the "higher," that is, of the more muscular, more energetic, more pushing, more complicated races; and his absence from amid the equable diffusion of courtesy and self-restraint that stamp the average Turanian, is alone no small compensation for the inferiority, if inferiority there be, of the gentler, calmer, less aggressive, also less progressive tribes. The adjuncts of an Epsom grand stand, or a Dutch "kermes," may make one occasionally regret the less civilised but better-mannered crowd of a Philippine "fiesta."

Quitting the equivocal attractions of the cock-pit, we engage a "caramata," one of the light covered jaunting-cars before described; the slim, scantily attired jarvey, sun-sheltered by his mushroom-like straw hat, and with somewhat of the professional humour of the Wellers of the earth on his boyish face, flogs into a canter the rough grass-fed ponies of the vehicle, and away we go, passing under a highly decorated bamboo gateway, built up right across the village entry, and side-doors for foot-farers, the whole extemporised for the day's festival with a prodigality of material and labour, seemingly out of all proportion with the means of the constructors. And now we are on the high road, where the ditches on either side, and the spreading trees planted at short intervals for welcome shade, are almost the only indications that it is a road at all in the European sense of the term. Uneven, irregular, now rock, now

mere soil rising in unmanageable hummocks, or deep-scored into ruts and holes, a day's rain, as rain is in the tropics, would render it next to impassable. But we will suppose our excursion to be made in the dry or the half-dry season, that is at any date between October and July, best if in February or March before the summer heats, too intense for average European endurance, have set in. Be our way then through the low-lands, rice districts, sugar districts; or be it, if more varied scenery attract us, amid the plantations of coffee, cacao, or "abaca," of the hilly grounds. The rice-fields are well watered with careful distribution; Mr. Fergusson does not err in assigning the palm of irrigative skill to the Turanian races; the cane patches, though small in individual extent, wave dense and yellow; the coffee-bushes, unlike the cruelly mutilated stumps that do duty for them in Ceylon, spread far their straggling boughs berry-laden; the broad leaves of the shapely "abaca" plantain glisten emerald in the sun. But to all one feature is common, or rather all are distinguished by the peculiar absence of one feature, rarely missed elsewhere in the colonial tropics, namely, large estates. Rice lands, cane lands, coffee lands, hemp lands alike, all are divided and subdivided; and however vast the green carpet of cultivation may be in its total extent, the irregular patches that make it up are not less infinite in number than capricious in shape. Equally remarkable is the absence of large agricultural establishments, buildings, factories, store-houses, and the like. Is that diminutive shed, with a few low heaps of crushed cane refuse about it, a sugar-mill? can that narrow thatch-covering be a coffee depôt? that rudely constructed hand-worked contrivance just seen through the plantain stems a hemp-preparing machine? Yet such in truth it is, such they are; and though specimens of somewhat more dignified dimensions may occasionally be found, they are rare exceptions, and may be counted, the Archipelago through, on the fingers; while the grandest of them would sink into mere insignificance if transferred to Demerara or Martinique, Australia, or Ceylon.

Large proprietors, in the accepted signification of the phrase, are rare in the Philippines, where "every rood of ground maintains its man;" and little room accordingly is left for the expansion of single estates. Little room, and, luckily, as we shall see, for the prosperity no less than for the happiness of the "natives," little agglomerated capital. Spanish capitalists here are none; and other European proprietors of land and field, from a variety of causes useless here to discuss, none worth mentioning also. Mestizos, that is half-breeds, generally of Chino-Malay origin, are the most bulky estate-owners; and the lands and fortunes they not rarely amass into one, seldom hold together beyond a life-time, but soon obey the Eastern law of subdivision between heirs, and fall asunder. The while far the greater part of the soil is in the hands of the Malays themselves, who, easily contented, and not much given to anxieties about fortune-making and the future, till each his little plot, and make their bargains for disposing of the produce with the Chinese

or semi-Chinese middlemen; by whom again it is transferred wholesale to European, chiefly British merchants, and so reaches the coast and the cargo ships.

Votaries, if such yet there be, of the "Manila cheroots," so sadly deteriorated of late years, may wonder here that no tobacco-growing district has been brought under our retrospective view. But these districts are almost wholly restricted to the northernmost region of the Archipelago, and are besides so exceptional in every respect, that they ought to be treated of, if at all, apart from any others. Their landscape is, I regret to say, a gloomy one, and I willingly refrain from the contrast of its sombre tints with the bright and cheerful hues around us to-day; they are proper to nine-tenths at least of Philippine territory, and peculiar to it.

In most, if not all other intertropical colonies—the West Indies for example—the administration and enterprise alike are both of them essentially European, the labour alone native. In these "Eastern Isles," on the contrary, the Spaniards, content with administration, have left enterprise no less than labour to the natives themselves. The result is a very remarkable one; we have already to a certain extent seen it exemplified in detail, and shall see more; let us now pause a moment to gather it up in one comprehensive view.

Eight million natives, more or less, inhabit the Philippines; and of this vast aggregate the principal, almost the only sustenance, morning, noon, and eve is rice. And what famine is, how frequent, how disastrous, how overwhelming among a rice-subsisting population, the annals of Madras, Orissa, Ceylon, Bengal, have too often taught us. A calamity that, it would seem, no foresight can avert, to which no remedy can suffice. And yet, in the Philippine Archipelago, scarcity even is of rare occurrence, famine unknown; in the worst of years hardly a sack of grain has to be imported; in average seasons the land has enough for her children, all swarming as they are, and to spare. More still, after deducting the entire vast extent of soil and amount of labour devoted exclusively to this one staff of local life, enough remains of both to supply the export trade with an equivalent of four to six millions sterling in sugar, coffee, hemp, tobacco, and all the other varied products of tropical agriculture. "Enough and over, enough for ourselves, and over and above for our neighbours," is the fact-spoken motto of the colony; and of how many other European colonies can this be said?—of any?

Whence then this abiding sufficiency? what is the want-repelling charm? Is it a better climate? a richer soil? a more regular and abundant rainfall than other island-groups can boast? To some extent, perhaps; but such advantages though they may contribute towards well-being, cannot of themselves effect it. Or is it greater skill, greater energy, greater aptitude for labour in the natives themselves. The Malay, like other children of the tropics, limits his labour by the measure of his requirements, and that measure is narrow indeed. Not so much what

they have, but rather what they have not, makes the good fortune of the Philippines, the absence of European enterprise, the absence of European capital. A few European capitalist settlers, a few giant estates, a few central factories, a few colossal money-making combinations of organised labour and gainful produce, and all the equable balance of property and production, of ownership and labour, that now leaves to the poorest cottager enough, and yet to the total colony abundance to spare, would be disorganised, displaced, upset; to be succeeded by day labour, pauperism, government relief, subscriptions, starvation. Europe, gainful insatiate Europe would reap the harvest; but to the now happy, contented, satiate Philippine Archipelago, what would remain but the stubble, but leanness, want, unrest, misery? The garden was the garden of Eden; its indwellers must needs hearken to the serpent counsel, develop its resources, and be themselves cast forth from sufficient, unappreciated happiness, never to regain it, never return.

O balmy life-giving breezes of the wide Pacific, with enjoyment in every flutter of your wings! O golden glories of the evening sun-god, ere yet he withdraws from view within his cloud-built palace of amber and crimson, reared on the deep immensity of blue! long be yours to range and reign over the waving emerald of the parcelled rice-field, the unpruned freedom of the fruit-clustered bough, the bannered flaglets of the yellowing cane-patch, the green glister of the plantain-grove, the triumph of the stately garden-palm, while frequent amid them, each sheltering its contented owner-peasant and the children-inheritors of the land, rise the little thatched cottages, undwarfed by the vast constructions of overshadowing capital, unsmirched by Western smoke and enginery; while the fruit-bearing land smiles her bounty on her unorphaned children, and the children yet claim for their own the native bosom of their own land. Birthright ill sold for any counter-exchange of elusive gain; Eden unequally bartered for the whole world of unrest and striving that seethes and struggles without the island bounds. Long may those bounds remain, long may they keep at bay the gods of the stranger, the price of the alien, the progress that is retrocession, the science that strips to nakedness, the energy that consumes and destroys, the greed of all-organising, all-devouring capital, the skilled force insatiate of its slaves, the iron and the gold. And thou, cherished vision of southern fancy, virgin-goddess of crowded shrines, Guadaloupe or Rosario, Lady of Refuge, Mother and Queen of men, revive in this encroaching, all-absorbing age thy ancient legends of dangers repelled, invaders baffled, protected island-shrines; and shroud in thy own mystic veil from the profane gaze of enterprise, from the intruding crews of progress, that fatal gift of beauty, fatal to so many of her sisters, the beauty of the Eastern sea-nymph who clings to thy knees, nestles at thy feet, secure in thy shelter, happy beyond desire in herself and thee.

A few minutes of brightest twilight and the warm star-spangled night calls forth the entire village, together with the flocking crowds

who have come from the adjoining hamlets, in whatever they can muster of gayest ornament, silver or silk, to take their share in the "Fiesta" of the district. From the pillared church front and the massive octangular bell-tower close by, now illuminated by countless lamps from base to summit, the graceful bamboo-constructed arches, flung at short intervals across the main road-way of the village, and round by a complete circuit to the church porch again, form a glowing avenue of coloured lanterns and transparent patterns and devices, beneath which the patronal procession is to pass. And here it comes, in two endless streams, men and boys in their fluttering blouses on one side of the road, women and girls in close-girded silks on the other, all bareheaded, and with lighted tapers in their hands, talking, laughing, and merry, but great or small alike orderly and decorous in word and gesture. The foremost are a good way already ahead; and now behold a painted tinsel-crowned image, the Baptist it may be, attired in half-military uniform, or S. Francis in his religious garb, or a Virgin-Martyr, diademed and bedizened, with real jewels of price, diamonds, rubies, emeralds, glittering amid the coloured ribbons and rags, borne along the midway between the files, high on a bedecked bamboo litter, amid a blaze of tapers that lights up as it passes the deep foliage on either side and overhead into a semblance of day. Then more processionists; and after a moderate interval a second demi-god, S. Michael it may be, or S. Peter perhaps, or any other worshipped ideal of the Catholic Pantheon, comes swaying along, more gorgeous than its predecessor; and yet a third, and a fourth; and all the while, with occasional halts for gathering up stragglers, or clearing the way ahead, the procession moves on, a double serpent of brilliancy, and thickens as it moves; while from amid the illuminated houses, and dense gardens off the road, rockets shoot up their irregular greetings far into the starry silence overhead. But now the crowd is at its closest, and the black official jackets of the village dignitaries on one side, and the brightest silks of their long-tressed helpmates on the other, usher in a gigantic litter, slow borne on the shoulders of the stoutest, stateliest devotees; where, throned amid a blazing pyramid of tapers, herself a blaze of tinsel and diamonds,

> Our Lady comes smiling and smart,
> With a pink gauze gown over spangles, and seven swords stuck in her heart;

or some other avatar likeness of Heaven's Queen; while all around swells the devout murmur of venerative triumph; close follows the village band, reinforced from the nearer hamlets, as it blares out its liveliest march; and "*O Dea certe*," in its Malay equivalent, fills every heart, and bursts from every tongue. "Idolatry! rank idolatry!" say you. And if so, what then? And what, I would fain know, is any worship, any rite man can offer to the Unknown Majesty, the Unknown Love but idolatry, whatever the symbol, whatever the expression? Image, picture, statue, book, wood, stone, word, written scroll, printed paper, idea, thought itself, what are they all in the great God-poised balance but symbols, but idols? Be

content then, my friend, with your own favourite idol, the image of your choice; bow before it, set it up never so high on the throne of your own making, it is well; but sneer not at, seek not to pull down the idols of your brethren; perhaps they are no further from the Infinite Truth they purport to symbolise than your own, like them finite too. Respect, though you participate not; give honour, though you refuse worship.

The procession winds on; and all the while a desultory firing off of rockets and bursting of crackers detains not a few of the faithful at its starting point, the village centre, the green before the church, till, after an hour and more of slow circuit, the crowd, tapers, images, band and all, have re-entered the temple; and a solemn benediction, bestowed with all the efficacy that bells, books, candles, music, vestments, and unquestioning belief can give, dismisses the worshippers to festivity and amusement; which, for the wealthier householders, means several hours of supper and dancing, song and cigars in their own dwellings or those of their friends. Copious the supper, lavish the hospitality. What the night's entertainment will cost our worthy "Capitan," whose brilliantly illuminated "sala" is crowded with at least sixty hungry Malay guests, and thrice the number of uninvited spectators, come to admire the chandeliers, the decorations, the musicians, and the dancers, often to join company with the last, and to partake in the unlimited refreshments set forth on the sideboards, I shudder to think. Perhaps so does he; but, at any rate, no outward sign of disquiet mars his composure, as with an unvarying smile of gratified hospitality he goes through the endless courtesies of a reception-night.

But the chief attraction of this period of the evening, and one to which even supper and dancing, roast pig and polka must yield in Malay estimation, is to be found out of doors, on the village square, not far from the church and the Capitan's own house. It is a spacious booth, the framework of bamboo, gaily draped and festooned with cloth white and red, and surmounted by flags; within is a raised stage, side-scenes, and curtains, the whole brilliantly lighted up, and open in front to the admiring crowd that will stand here and gaze for hours; on either side, reaching to some distance, rows of improvised boxes and seats, tier above tier, theatre-fashion, and hung with bright colours, give the more "fashionable" spectators view on the central stage. But boxes, seats, standing-room, all are gratis to-night, when the village itself defrays the expenses of the common amusement. The drama is a Malay one, and the characters numerous; kings, queens, chieftains, damsels, grave counsellors, nobles, soldiers, and so forth, all in the gayest dresses of Malayan type. The plot is generally an adaptation of some Biblical story, that of David and Jonathan being the most often selected, sometimes it is taken from the Hagiology; occasionally from semi-historical records of wars and reigns. The dialogue is commonly in verse; the acting more energetic than Hamlet might have approved; the music, abundantly bestowed as accompaniment, tolerable. But whatever the theme, two characters, peculiar in their mode of adaptation to the Malay

drama, are never wanting. One is a quaintly attired buffoon, who the whole play throughout, and in the midst of the most serious or pathetic scenes, suddenly cuts in from time to time, now addressing the actors and actresses—the latter are most often, as on the old English stage, lads in female dress—with some absurd counterfeit of their own speeches and gestures, now mimicking them in a sort of stage-aside for the benefit of the audience; and thus, in a rude fashion, supplying that side current of the comedy of human life, keeping pace with its tragedy, which the skill of Shakspeare never fails to present personified in the Stephanos and Pompeys, the nurses and clowns of his noblest dramas. I should add that the Malay buffoon is very rarely coarse, never indecent, in his licence. The other character is the prompter, not studiously unseen and unheard by the audience, as with us, but patent to all on the mid-stage, and reciting in a loud voice every sentence of the play, to be repeated after him with appropriate action by the characters themselves. The length of the performance, never under three hours, sometimes extends over as many successive nights, nor seems to tire the spectators. Meanwhile, roadside sheds, offering to Malay palates a tempting display of sweetmeats and refreshments, booths for billiard-players, and other minor amusements or attractions, abound on all sides; drunkenness and disorder are conspicuous by their absence only.

Thus pass the hours till the approach of midnight is announced by a sudden glare of light and a noise like that of a well-sustained musketry discharge, summoning all who have not already by anticipation mustered on the spot, to the field outside the village, where the "Castel" crowns in fire the rejoicings and glories of the festival.

It is, if not in general conception, yet certainly in detail, a genuine Philippine toy. A tower, of two, three, or even four stages, is constructed of bamboos close interlaced and tied together, with turrets and battlements *ad libitum*, till the whole reaches twenty-five or thirty feet in height; above, below, and to every part of the framework squibs, crackers, Catherine wheels, Roman candles, and rockets innumerable are made fast, ready for firing; and all about the "Castel" itself, but at some little distance, rise outworks, also twined of bamboo, and densely covered with fireworks of every description. For weeks beforehand preparations have been going on, and the yet unkindled edifice, festooned with white or coloured cloth, and bravely bedecked with streamer and flag, has been the favourite resort of afternoon crowds, a constant centre of joyful anticipation. Now its hour is come; midnight draws on, and the waning moon yet hangs low in the dark sky; when suddenly a preliminary up-burst of some scores of rockets, grouped clusterwise, and filling the night air as they explode with floating showers of soft-falling stars, green, red, white, purple, blue, ushers in the grand act of the "Castel." From every side, every angle of barricade and tower, the fire rushes simultaneously forth, crackling, hissing, exploding, a fairy pandemonium, lighting up the tall trees and bamboo clusters in the fields

around far and wide, and every face in the thick-gathered crowd beneath; for not a man, woman, or child of all who have attended the "fiesta" would for any human consideration miss the spectacle, the very bourne and utmost goal of their inventive delight; and at each fresh explosion the rapturous applause rises higher till it reaches the highest pitch of excitement consistent with the habitual impassive calm of the Malay character. Sometimes this excitement is intensified by the added sport of a fiery bull, that is, a wicker framework more or less representing the animal, and well protected by thick hides, outside of which squibs and crackers are fastened in plenty, while a couple of men concealed within the hollow, and protected from the blaze without by the hide covering, make the burning, crackling monster rush hither and thither among the spectators, who skurry away on all sides in real or simulated alarm, amid shrieks and laughter. Thus midnight passes, and the merry tumult is at its loudest and maddest, when, all too soon, the "Castel" fires wane and dwindle, the explosions cease, the last rockets shed their sinking stars, and a few minutes later all is darkness and silence over the trampled field; noiselessly, rapidly the crowd has melted away and dispersed each to his resting-place to sleep out the brief space left till dawn, and the moon, left sole queen of the night, casts her white veil in a semblance of thin snow over grove and garden, church and home-roof, where a few expiring lamps yet twinkle amid a stillness like the stillness of the dead. We return to the room prepared for us by our host of the day before; and the bright morning sun wakes us to find the husbandmen already gone to early mass, or out with their buffaloes in the fields, the women moving to and fro with their water jars, or washing clothes in the neighbouring stream; streets and roads are all alive with slight-clad wayfarers and creaking carts; and the daily current of village life is flowing calmly in its wonted channels; as, escorted to the outer gate by the "Capitan" and his attendants, we take our leave, and fare forth on our journey by sun and shade, mountain and river, hamlet and field, back to Manila.

To Manila? I lean over the low bulwarks of the *Leite*, as the little craft cleaves her south-western way towards the Straits of Singapore, and now see nothing around but the green heavings of the tepid China Sea; the last dim outline of high Mindoro and wild Palawan, westernmost island of the Spain-ruled Archipelago, has faded into sky; and the swarthy, active, boyish-seeming crew of sailors and firemen is all that remains in presence yet for five voyage-days more of the Philippines and their inhabitants. Passed Singapore; and these too will be things of the past. But of all tropical lands, all tropical races that it has been my lot to visit, none will have left a pleasanter, a more heart-satisfying memory than the Philippine Archipelago, the home of the half-civilised Malay. Is wholly-civilised Europe, is England herself, a better home to her children? a happier? Compare and judge.

W. G. PALGRAVE.

The Origin of Fruits.

In the whole museum of nature the eye of the artist can find nothing lovelier than flowers; but the second rank in beauty may be fairly claimed on behalf of fruits. Whether we look at the golden oranges, the pink-cheeked mangoes, the purple star-apples, and the scarlet capsicums of the south, or at our own crimson cherries, blushing grapes, bright holly-berries, and rosy apples, we are equally struck with the delicacy of their melting tints and the graceful curves of their rounded form. Our painters have revelled in their rich colouring; and even our sculptors, whose fastidious art compels them to reject that meretricious charm, have loved to chisel their swelling contours in snowy stone. As they hang pendent from their native boughs, clustering in brilliant masses, or scattered here and there as points of brighter light amid the dark foliage which throws up in strong relief their exquisite hues, we may recognise in their beauty the ultimate source of all that refined pleasure which mankind derives from the varied shades of earth and sea and sky, of flower and bird and butterfly, and even of the "human face divine" itself. From the contemplation of ruddy or snowy berries in primæval forests the frugivorous ancestors of our race first acquired the taste for brilliant hues, whose final outcome has produced at length our modern picture-galleries and palaces, our flower-gardens and conservatories, our household ornament and our decorative art.

In a previous paper on "The Origin of Flowers,"* we endeavoured to trace the mutual reactions of insects and blossoms upon one another's forms and hues. But we then deferred for awhile the consideration of the further question—why do human beings admire these bright whorls of coloured leaves, whose primitive function consisted in the attraction of bees and butterflies? Through what community of origin or nature does the eye of man find itself agreeably stimulated by the tints which were first developed to suit the myriad facets of primæval insects? The answer to this question we have now to attempt, by showing the various steps through which the coverings of certain seeds acquired, for the vertebrate orders—the birds and quadrupeds—exactly the same allurements of colour, scent, and taste which flowers had already acquired for the articulate orders—the bees and butterflies. To the attractive hues of fruit, I believe, we must ultimately trace back our whole artistic

* See the Cornhill Magazine for May, 1878.

pleasure in the pure physical stimulation of beautiful colours, displayed by natural objects or artificial products.

Our present inquiry, then, will yield us some account of that primitive delight in red, purple, orange, and yellow, which we usually take for granted as an innate instinct of humanity, savage or civilised. When, some few months back, we analysed the various elements of pleasure which make up our æsthetic enjoyment of a daisy, we were compelled, for the time being, to leave the original beauty of its pink and white rays wholly unexplained. We regarded the delight in colour, relatively to the subject we were then examining, as an ultimate and indecomposable factor in our developed consciousness. To-day, however, I hope we shall be able to go a little further back, and to show that this delight, like all other feelings of our nature, is no mere chance and meaningless accident, but the slow result of a long adaptation whereby man has gradually become fitted to the high and responsible station which he now occupies at the head of organic existence.

The sole object of flowering is the production of seeds, that is to say, of embryo plants, destined to replace their parents, and continue the life of their species to future generations. Flowers and seeds go together; every flower producing seed, and every seed springing from a flower. Ferns and other like plants, which have no blossoms, bring forth spores which grow into shapeless little fronds, instead of true seeds containing a young plantlet. But all flowering species produce some kind of genuine fruit, supplied with more or less of nutriment for the tender embryo in its earlier days. And this matter of nutriment is so important to a right comprehension of our subject that I venture, even at the imminent peril of appearing dull, to digress a little into the terrible mysteries of Energy, which comprise the whole difficulty of the question.

Wherever movement is taking place in any terrestrial object, the energy which moves it has been directly or indirectly supplied from the sun. In the green parts of plants, the solar rays are perpetually producing a separation of carbon and oxygen, the former element being stored up in the tissues themselves, while the latter is turned loose upon the atmosphere in a free state. Whenever they re-combine, motion and heat will result, as we see alike in our grates, our steam-engines, and our own bodies. An animal is a sort of machine—viewed from a purely physical standpoint—in which the energetic materials laid up by plants are being reconverted into the warmth which reveals itself to our touch, and the evident movement which we see in its limbs. The vegetable or animal substances which are capable of yielding these energies to our bodies we know as food or nutriment. They perform exactly the same part in the physical economy of men or beasts as that which fuel performs in the physical economy of the steam-engine. Of course, from the *mental* point of view, we have the immense difference between a self-conscious, self-guiding organism, and a dead machine requiring to be supplied and regulated by an external consciousness; yet in the fundamental physical

necessity for energetic material, either as food or as fuel, both mechanisms follow essentially the self-same mechanical laws.

But what has all this to do with the origin of fruits? Very little at first sight, indeed, yet everything when we look at the bottom of the question. In fact, what is thus true of animals and steam-engines, is equally true of plants. No motion can take place in a growing shoot without the aid of solar energy, directly supplied by the sunshine, or indirectly laid by in the older tissues. In the green parts of a plant this energy is immediately derived from the bounteous light which bathes and vivifies the leaves on every side; but in many other portions of the vegetable organism, energies previously accumulated by older organs are perpetually being utilised, for the production of movement and growth, by lazy structures which cannot work for themselves, and so feed upon the useful materials collected for them by more industrious members of the plant-commonwealth. Especially is this the case with those expensive organs which are concerned in perpetuating the species to future generations. A flower or a seed cannot directly transform waves of light into chemical separation of atoms; they depend for their growth and the due performance of their important functions upon similar separations already carried on for their behoof by the green leaves on whose bounty they rely for proper subsistence. Carbon, set free from oxygen in the leaves, has been carried to them in loose combinations by the sap; and as the bud unfolds or the seed germinates, the oxygen once more unites with this carbon (just as it unites in the furnace of the steam-engine, or the recesses of the animal body), and motion is thereby rendered possible. But without such an access of free oxygen to re-combine with the energetic materials, the blossom or the embryo could never grow at all. So we may regard these portions of a plant, incapable of self-support, and dependent for their due function upon energetic compounds laid by elsewhere, as the exact analogues of the animal or the steam-engine. They are in fact similar mechanisms, where food is being used up, and fuel is being consumed; and we find accordingly, as we might naturally expect, not only that motion results, but also that heat is evolved in quantities quite sufficient to be measured by very delicate thermometers.

Now every growing portion of a plant shares, more or less, in this animal function of feeding upon previously-fabricated nutriment. But there are two sets of organs, both intended ultimately to subserve the same purpose, in which that function becomes especially apparent. The first is in the case of the whole regular reproductive mechanism, including in that term buds, flowers, fruits, and seeds; the second is in the case of such subsidiary reproductive devices as tubers, rhizomes, corms, and all the other varieties of underground stems or roots, which botanists divide into so many puzzling technical classes, while ordinary people are content to lump them roughly together as bulbs. If we glance briefly at each of these two cases, we shall be able to comprehend more fully their connection with the doctrine of energy, and also to see more

clearly the problem before us when we endeavour to unravel the origin of fruits.

A germinating pea or a young blade of wheat is supplied by its parent with a large stock of nutriment in the shape of starch, albumen, or other common food-stuffs. If we were to burn the wheat instead of planting it, the energy contained in its substance would be given off during the act of combustion as light and heat. If, again, we were to adopt a more usual course, by grinding, baking, and eating it, then the enclosed energy would minister to the warmth of our bodies, and do its little part in enabling us to walk a mile or to lift a heavy weight. But if, in lieu of either plan, we follow the original design of nature by covering the seed with moist earth, the chemical changes which take place within it, still resulting in heat and motion, produce that special form of movement which we know as germination. New cells form themselves about the feathery head, a little sprout pushes timidly its way through the surrounding soil, and soon a pair of rounded leaves or a spike of pointed blades may be seen spreading a mass of delicate green toward the open sunlight overhead. By the time that all the stored-up nutriment contained in the seed has been thus devoured by the young plantlet, these green surfaces are in a position to assimilate fresh material for themselves, from the air which bathes them on every side, under the energetic influence of the sunbeams that fall each moment on their growing cells. But I need hardly point out the exact analogy which we thus perceive between the earliest action of the young plant and the similar actions of the frugivorous animals which subsist upon the food intended for its use.

If, however, we look at the second great case, that of bulbs and tubers, we shall see the same truth still more clearly displayed. You cannot grow a blade of wheat or a sprouting pea in the dark. The seed will germinate, it is true; but as soon as the primitive store of nutriment has been used up, it will wither away and die. Naturally enough, when all its original energy is gone, and no new energy is afforded to it from without in the form of sunshine, it cannot miraculously make growth for itself out of nothing. But if you put a hyacinth bulb in a dark cellar, and supply it with a sufficiency of water, it will grow and blossom almost as luxuriantly as in a sunny window. Now what is the difference between these two cases? Simply this: the wheat-grain or the pea has only nutriment enough supplied it by the parent plant to carry it over the first few days of its life, until it can shift for itself; while the hyacinth has energetic materials stored up in its capacious bulb to keep it in plenty during all the days of its summer existence. If we plant it in an open spot where it can bask in the bright sunshine, it will produce healthy green leaves, which help it to flower and to carry on its other physiological actions without depending entirely upon its previous accumulations: but if we place it in some dark corner, away from the sun, though its leaves will be blanched and sickly-looking, it will still

have sufficient nutriment of its own to support it through the blossoming season without the external aid of fresh sunshine.

Where did this nutriment come from, however? It was stored up, in the case of the seed, by the mother-plant; in the case of the bulb, by the hyacinth itself. The materials produced in the leaves were transferred by the sap into the flower or the stem, and were there laid by in safety till a need arose for their expenditure. All last year—perhaps for many years before—the hyacinth leaves were busily engaged in assimilating nutritive matter from the air about them, none of which the plant was then permitted to employ in the production of a blossom, but all was prudently treasured up by the gardener's care in the swelling bulb. This year, enough nourishment has been laid by to meet the cost of flowering, and so our hyacinth is enabled to produce, through its own resources, without further aid from the sun, its magnificent head of bright-coloured and heavily-scented purple bells.

Each species of plant must, of course, solve for itself the problem, during the course of its development, whether its energies will be best employed by hoarding nutriment for its own future use in bulbs and tubers, or by producing richly-endowed seeds which will give its offspring a better chance of rooting themselves comfortably, and so surviving in safety amid the ceaseless competition of rival species. The various cereals, such as wheat, barley, rye, and oats, have found it most convenient to grow afresh with each season, and to supply their embryos with an abundant store of food for their sustenance during the infant stage of plant life. Their example has been followed by peas and other pulses, by the wide class of nuts, and by the majority of garden fruits. On the other hand, the onion and the tiger-lily store nutriment for themselves in the underground stem, surrounded by a mass of overlapping or closely-wound leaves, which we call a bulb; the iris and the crocus lay by their stock of food in a woody or fleshy stalk; the potato makes a rich deposit of starch in its subterraneous branches or tubers; the turnip, carrot, radish, and beet use their root as the store-house for their hoarded food-stuffs; while the orchis produces each year a new tubercle by the side of its existing root, and this second tubercle becomes in turn the parent of its next year's flowering stem. Perhaps, however, the common colchicum or meadow-saffron affords the most instructive instance of all; for during the summer it sends up green leaves alone, which devote their entire time to the accumulation of food-stuffs in a corm at their side; and when the autumn comes round, this corm produces, not leaves, but a naked flower-stalk, which pushes its way through the moist earth, and stands solitary before the October winds, depending wholly upon the stock of nutriment laid up for it in the corm.

If we look at the parts of plants which are used as food by man or other mammals, we shall see even more clearly the community of nature between the animal functions and those of seeds, flowers, and bulbs. It is true that the graminivorous animals, like deer, sheep, cows, and

horses, live mainly off the green leaves of grasses and creeping plants. But we know how small an amount of food they manage to extract from these fibrous masses, and how constantly their whole existence is devoted to the monotonous and imperative task of grazing for very life. Those animals, however, who have learnt to live at the least cost to themselves always choose the portions of a plant which it has stored with nourishment for itself or its offspring. Men and monkeys feed naturally off fruits, seeds, and bulbs. Wheat, maize, rye, barley, oats, rice, millet, pease, vetches, and other grains or pulses form the staple sustenance of half mankind. Other fruits largely employed for food are plantains, bananas, bread-fruit, dates, cocoa-nuts, chestnuts, mangoes, mangostines, and papaws. Among roots, tubers, and bulbs, stored with edible materials, may be mentioned beet, carrot, radishes, turnips, swedes, ginger, potatoes, yam, cassava, onions, and Jerusalem artichokes. But if we look at the other vegetables used as food, we shall observe at once that they are few in number, and unimportant in economical value. In cabbage, Brussels sprouts, lettuce, succory, spinach, and water-cress, we eat the green leaves: yet nobody would ever dream of making a meal off any of these poor food-stuffs. The stalk or young sprout forms the culinary portion of asparagus, celery, seakale, rhubarb, and angelica, none of which vegetables are remarkable for their nutritious properties. In all the remaining food-plants, some part of the flowering apparatus supplies the table, as in true artichokes, where we eat the receptacle, richly stocked with nutriment for the opening florets; or in cauliflower, where we choose the young flower-buds themselves. In short, we find that men and the higher animals generally support themselves upon those parts of plants in which energy has been accumulated either for the future growth and unfolding of the plant itself, or for the sustenance of its tender offspring.

And now, after this long preamble, let us come back to our original question, and seek to discover what is the origin of fruits.

In botanical language, every structure which contains the seeds resulting from the fertilisation of a single blossom is known as a fruit, however hard, dry, and unattractive may be its texture or appearance. But I propose at present to restrict the term to its ordinary meaning in the mouths of every-day speakers, and to understand by it some kind of succulent seed-covering, capable of being used as food by man or other vertebrates. And our present object must be simply to discover how these particular coverings came to be developed in the slow course of organic evolution.

Doubtless the earliest seeds differed but little from the spores of ferns and other flowerless plants in the amount of nutriment with which they were provided and the mode in which they were dropped upon the nursing soil beneath. But as time went on, during the great secondary and tertiary ages of geology, throughout whose long course first the conifers and then the true flowering plants slowly superseded the gigantic horse-

tails and tree-ferns of the coal-measures, many new devices for the dispersion and nutrition of seeds were gradually developed by the pressure of natural selection.* Those plants which merely cast their naked embryos adrift upon the world to shift for themselves in the fierce struggle of stout and hardy competitors must necessarily waste their energies in the production of an immense number of seeds. In fact, calculations have been made which show that a single scarlet corn-poppy produces in one year no less than 50,000 embryos: and some other species actually exceed this enormous figure. If, then, any plant happens by a favourable combination of circumstances to modify the shape of its seed in such a manner that it can be more readily conveyed to open or unoccupied spots, it will be able in future to economise its strength, and thus to give both itself and its offspring a better chance in the struggle for life. There are many ways in which natural selection has effected this desirable consummation.

The thistle, the dandelion, and the cotton-bush provide their seeds with long tufts of light hair, thin and airy as gossamer, by which they are carried on the wings of the wind to bare spaces, away from the shadow of their mother-plant, where they may root themselves successfully in the vacant soil. The maple, the ash, and the pine supply their embryos with flattened wings, which serve them in like manner not less effectually. Both these we may classify as *wind-dispersed* seeds. A second set of plants have seed-vessels which burst open explosively when ripe, and scatter their contents to a considerable distance. The balsam forms the commonest example in our European gardens; but a well-known tropical tree, the sand-box, displays the same peculiarity in a form which is almost alarming, as its large, hard, dry capsules fly apart with the report of a small pistol, and drive out the disk-shaped nuts within so forcibly as to make a blow on the cheek decidedly unpleasant. These we may designate as *self-dispersed* seeds. Yet a third class may be conveniently described as *animal-dispersed*, divisible once more into two sub-classes, the involuntarily and the voluntarily aided. Of the former kind we have examples in those seeds which, like burrs and cleavers, are covered with little hooks, by whose assistance they attach themselves to the fur or wool of passers-by. The latter or voluntarily aided sort are exemplified in fruits proper, the subject of our present investigation, such as apples, plums, peaches, cherries, haws, and brambleberries. Every one of these plants is provided with hard and indigestible seeds, coated or surrounded by a soft, sweet, pulpy, perfumed, bright-coloured, and nutritious covering known as fruit. By all these means the plant allures birds or mammals to swallow and disperse its

* I trust that in the sequel, the critical botanist will excuse me for having neglected the strict terminology of carpological science, and made no distinction between seeds and fruits. Some little simplification is absolutely necessary for general readers in this the most involved department of structural botany.

undigested seed, giving in, as it were, the pulpy covering as a reward to the animal for the service thus conferred. But before we go on to inquire into the mode of their development we must glance aside briefly at a second important difference in the constitution of seeds.

If we plant a grain of mustard-seed in moist earth and allow it to germinate, we shall see that its young leaves begin from the very first to grow green and assimilate energetic matter from the air around them. They are, indeed, compelled to do so, because they have no large store of nutriment laid up in the seed-leaves for their future use by the mother-plant. But if we treat a pea in the same manner, we shall find that it long continues to derive nourishment from the abundant stock of food treasured up in its big round seed-leaves. Now of course any plant which thus learns to lay by in time for the wants of its offspring gives its embryo a far better chance of surviving and leaving descendants in its turn, than one which abandons its infant plants to their own unaided resources in a stern battle with the unkindly world. Exactly the same difference exists between the two cases as that which exists between the wealthy merchant's son, launched on life with abundant capital accumulated by his father, and the street Arab, turned adrift, as soon as he can walk alone, to shift or starve for himself in the lanes and alleys of a great city.

So then, as plants went on varying and improving under the stress of over-population, it would naturally result that many species must hit independently upon this device of laying by granaries of nutriment for the use of their descendants. But side by side with the advancing development of vegetable life, animal life was also developing in complexity and perfect adaptation to its circumstances. And herein lay a difficult dilemma for the unhappy plant. On the one hand, in order to compete with its neighbours, it must lay up stores of starch and oil and albumen for the good of its embryos; while, on the other hand, the more industriously it accumulated these expensive substances, the more temptingly did it lay itself open to the depredations of the squirrels, mice, bats, monkeys, and other clever thieves, whose number was daily increasing in the forests round about. The plant becomes, in short, like a merchant in a land exposed to the inroads of powerful robbers. If he does not keep up his shop with its tempting display of wares, he must die for want of custom; if he shows them too readily and unguardedly, he will lay himself open to be plundered of his whole stock-in-trade. In such a case, the plant and the merchant have recourse to the self-same devices. Sometimes they surround themselves with means of defence against the depredators; sometimes they buy themselves off by sacrificing a portion of their wealth to secure the safety of the remainder. Those seeds which adopt the former plan we call *nuts*, while to those which depend upon the latter means of security we give the name of *fruits*.

A nut is a hard-coated seed, which deliberately lays itself out to

escape the notice and baffle the efforts of monkeys and other frugivorous animals. Instead of bidding for attention by its bright hues, like the flower and fruit, the nut is purposely clad in a quiet coat of uniform green, indistinguishable from the surrounding leaves, during its earlier existence; while afterwards it assumes a dull brown colour as it lies upon the dusky soil beneath. Nuts are rich in oils and other useful food-stuffs: but to eat these is destructive to the life of the embryo: and therefore the nut commonly surrounds itself with a hard and stony shell, which defies the stoutest teeth to pierce its thickened walls. Outside this solid coating, it often spreads a softer covering with a nauseous, bitter taste, so familiar to us all in the walnut, which at once warns off the enemy from attacking the unsavoury morsel. Not content with all these protective devices, of colour, taste, and hardness, the nut in many cases contains poisonous juices, and is thickly clad in hooked and pointed mail, which wounds the hands or lips of the would-be robber. In brief, a nut is a seed which has survived in the struggle for life by means of mutiplied protections against the attacks of enemies. We cannot have a better instance of these precautions than the common cocoa-nut palm. Its seed hangs at a great height from the ground, on a tall and slender stem, unprovided with branches which might aid the climber, and almost inaccessible to any animal except the persevering monkey. Its shell is very thick and hard, so extremely impermeable that a small passage has to be left by which the germinating shoot may push its way out of the stronghold where it is born. Outside this shell, again, lies a thick matting of hairy fibres, whose elasticity breaks its fall from the giddy height at which it hangs. Yet, in spite of all these cunning precautions, even the cocoa-nut is not quite safe from the depredations of monkeys, or, stranger still, of tree-climbing crabs. The common Brazil-nuts of our fruiterers' shops are almost equally interesting, their queer, shapeless forms being closely packed together, as they hang from their native boughs, in a hard outer shell, not unlike that of the cocoa-nut. It must be very annoying to the unsuspecting monkey, who has succeeded after violent efforts in breaking the external coat, to find that he must still deal with a mass of hard, angular, and uncanny nuts, which sadly cut his tender gums and threaten the stability of his precious teeth—those invaluable tools which serve him well in the place of knives, hammers, scissors, and all other human implements.

A fruit, on the other hand, lays itself open in every way to attract the attention of animals, and so to be dispersed by their aid, often amid the nourishing refuse of their meals. It is true that, with the fruit as with the nut, to digest the actual seed itself would be fatal to the life of the young plant. But fruits get over this difficulty by coating their seeds first with a hard, indigestible shell, and then with a soft, sweet, pulpy, and nutritious outer layer. The purely accidental or functional origin of this covering is testified by the immense variety of ways in which it has been developed. Sometimes a single seed has shown a

slight tendency to succulence in its outer coat, and forthwith it has gone on laying up juices from generation to generation, until it has developed into a one-seeded berry. Sometimes a whole head of seeds has been surrounded by a fleshy stem, and the attention of animals has thenceforward encouraged its new habit by ensuring the dispersion of its embryos. A few of the various methods by which fruits attain their object we shall examine in detail further on: it will suffice for the present to point out that any property which secured for the seed dispersion by animal agency would at once give it an advantage over its fellows, and thus tend to be increased in all future generations.

So, then, as birds, squirrels, bats, monkeys, and the higher animals generally increased on the face of the earth, every seed which showed a tendency to surround itself with succulent pulp would obviously gain a point thereby in its rivalry with other species. Accordingly, as we might naturally expect, fruits, which have been developed to suit the taste of birds and mammals, are of much more recent geological origin than flowers, which have been developed to suit the taste of insects. For example, there is no family of plants which contains a greater number of fruity seeds than the rose tribe, in which are comprised the apple, pear, plum, cherry, blackberry, raspberry, strawberry, quince, medlar, loquat, peach, apricot, and nectarine, besides the humbler hips, haws, sloes, and common hedge-fruits, which, though despised by lordly man, form the chief winter sustenance of such among our British birds as do not migrate to warmer climates during our chilly December days. Now, no trace of the rose tribe can be discovered until late in tertiary times; in other words, no fruit-bearers appear before the evolution of the fruit-eaters who called them into existence: while, on the other hand, the rapid development and variation of the tribe in the succeeding epoch shows how great an advantage it derived from its tendency to produce edible seed-coverings.

But not only must these coverings be succulent and nutritious: they must also be conspicuous and alluring. For the attainment of these objects the fruit has recourse to just the same devices which had already been so successfully initiated by the insect-fertilised flowers. It collects into its pulpy substance a quantity of that commonly-diffused vegetable principle which we call sugar. Now sugar, from its crystalline composition, is peculiarly adapted for acting upon the exposed nerves of taste in the tongue of vertebrates; and the stimulation which it affords, like all healthy and normal ones, when not excessive in amount, is naturally pleasurable to the excited sense. Of course, in our own case, the long habituation of our frugivorous ancestors to this particular stimulant has rendered us peculiarly sensitive to its effects. But even from the first, there can be little doubt that a body so specially fitted to arouse sensation in the gustatory nerve must have afforded pleasure to the unspecialised palates of birds and rodents: for we know that even in the case of naturally carnivorous animals, like dogs, a taste for sugar is

extremely noticeable. So then, the sweet juices of the fruit were early added to its soft and nutritive pulp as an extra attraction for the animal senses.

Perfume of course follows in the wake of sweetness. Indeed, the difference between taste and smell is much smaller than most people imagine. When tiny floating particles of a body, in the gaseous state, affect certain exposed nerves in the cavity of the nose, we call the resulting sensation an odour; when larger particles of the same body, in the liquid or dissolved state, affect similar exposed nerves in the tongue, we call the resulting sensation a taste. But the mechanism of the two senses is probably quite similar, while their exciting causes and their likes or dislikes are almost identical. As our great psychological teacher, Mr. Herbert Spencer, well puts it, "smell is anticipatory taste." So we need not be surprised to find that the delicate fragrance of peaches, strawberries, oranges, and pineapples, is a guide to their edibility, and a foreshadowing of their delicious flavour, leading us on by an instinctive action to place the savoury morsels between our lips.

But the greatest need of all, if the plant would succeed in enticing the friendly parrot or the obsequious lemur to disperse its seed, is that of conspicuousness. Let the fruit be ever so luscious and ever so laden with sweep syrups, it can never secure the suffrages of the higher animals if it lies hidden beneath a mass of green foliage, or clothes itself in the quiet garb of the retiring nut. To attract from a distance the eyes of wandering birds or mammals, it must dress itself up in a gorgeous livery of crimson, scarlet, and orange. The contrast between nuts and fruits is exactly parallel to the contrast between the wind-fertilised and the insect-fertilised flowers. An apple-tree laden with its red-cheeked burden, an orange bough weighed down with its golden spheres, a rowan or a holly bush displaying ostentatiously its brilliant berries to the birds of the air, is a second edition of the roses, the rhododendrons, and the May-thorns, which spread their bright petals in the spring before the fascinated eyes of bees and butterflies. Some gay and striking tint, which may contrast strongly with the green foliage around, is needed by the developing fruit, or else its pulpiness, its sweetness, and its fragrance will stand it in poor stead beside its bright-hued compeers.

How fruits began to acquire these brilliant tints is not difficult to see. We found already in the case of flowers that all external portions of a plant, except such green parts as are actually engaged in assimilating carbon, under the influence of solar energies, show a tendency to assume tints other than green. This tendency would, of course, be checked by natural selection in those seeds which, like nuts, are destroyed by animals, and so endeavour to escape their notice; while it would be increased by natural selection in those seeds which, like fruits proper, derive benefit from the observation of animals, and so endeavour to attract their attention. But it is noticeable that fruits themselves are sour, green, and hard during their unripe stage,—that is to say, before the seeds are ready

to be severed from the mother-plant; and that they only acquire their sweet taste, brilliant colour, and soft pulp just at the time when their mature seeds become capable of a separate existence.

Perhaps, however, the point which most clearly proves the purely functional origin of fruits is found in the immense variety of their structure, a variety far surpassing that of any other vegetable organ. It does not matter at all what portion of the seed-covering or its adjacent parts happens first to show the tendency towards succulence, sweetness, fragrance, and brilliancy. It serves the attractive purpose equally well whether it be calyx, or stalk, or skin, or receptacle. Just as in the case of flowers, we found that the coloured portion might equally well consist of stamens, petals, sepals, bracts, or spathe,—so, but even more conspicuously in the case of fruits, the attractive pulp may be formed of any organ whatsoever which exhibits the least tendency towards a pulpy habit, and an accumulation of saccharine deposits.

Thus, in the pomegranate, each separate seed is enclosed in a juicy testa or altered shell; in the nutmeg and the spindle-tree, an aril or purely gratuitous coloured mass spreads gradually over the whole inner nut; in the plum and cherry, a single part, the pericarp, divides itself into two membranes, whereof the inner or protective coat is hard and stony, while the outer or attractive coat is soft, sweet, and bright-coloured; in the strawberry, the receptacle, which should naturally be a mere green bed for the various seed-vessels, grows high, round, pulpy, sweet, and ruddy; in the rose, the fruit-stem expands into a scarlet berry, containing the seed-vessels within, which also happens in a slightly different manner with the apple, pear, and quince; while in the fig, a similar stem encloses the innumerable seeds belonging to a whole colony of tiny blossoms, which thus form a compound fruit, just as the daisy head, with its mass of clustered florets, forms a composite flower. Strangest of all, the common South American cashew tree produces its nut (which is the true fruit) at the end of a swollen, pulpy, coloured stalk, and so preserves its embryo by the vicarious sacrifice of a fallacious substitute. These are only a few out of the many ways in which the selective power of animals has varied the surroundings of different seeds to serve a single ultimate purpose.

Nor is any plan too extravagant for adoption by some aberrant species. What seed-organ could seem less adapted for the attraction of animals than a cone like that of pines and fir trees? Yet even this hard, scaly covering has been modified, in the course of ages, so as to form a fruit. In the cypress, with its soft young cones, we can see dimly the first step in the process; in the juniper, the cone has become quite succulent and berry-like; and finally, in the red fruit of the yew, all resemblance to the original type is entirely overlaid by its acquired traits.

Equally significant is the fact that closely-allied species often choose totally different means for attracting or escaping observation. Thus,

within the limits of the rose tribe itself we get such remarkable variations as the strawberry, where the receptacle forms the fruit; the apple, which depends on the peduncle, or swollen stalk, for its allurement; the raspberry, where each seed-vessel of the compound group has a juicy coating of its own, and so forth; while, on the other hand, the potentilla has no fruit at all, in the popular sense of the word; and the almond actually diverges so far from the ordinary habits of the tribe as to adopt the protective tactics of a nut. Similarly, in the palm tribe, while most species fortify themselves against monkeys by shells of extravagant hardness, as we see in the vegetable ivory, and the solid coquilla nuts from which door-handles are manufactured, a few kinds, like the date and the doom-palm, trust rather to the softness and sweetness of their pulp, as aids to dispersion. The truth which we learn from these diverse cases may be shortly summed up thus: Whatever peculiarities tend to preserve the life of a species, in whatever opposite ways, equally aid it in the struggle for life, and may be indifferently produced in the most closely related types.

And now let us glance for a moment—less fully than the subject demands, for this long exposition has run away with our space—at the reactive effects of fruit upon the animal eye. We took it for granted above that birds and mammals could discriminate between the red or yellow berry and the green foliage in whose midst it grows. Indeed, were other proof wanting, we should be justified in concluding that animals generally are possessed of a sense for the discrimination of colour, from the mere fact that all those fruits and flowers which depend for their dispersion or fertilisation upon animal agency, are brightly tinted, while all those which depend upon the wind, or other insentient energies, are green or dull brown in hue. But many actual observations, too numerous to be detailed here, also show us beyond the possibility of error, that the higher animals do, as a matter of fact, possess a sense of colour, differing in no important particular from that of civilised man.

Whether this sense was developed, however, by the constant search for berries and insects, or whether it was derived from a still earlier ancestry, it would be very difficult to decide. It is possible that, as we saw reason to believe in the case of the flowers and the insect vision, the colours of fruits and the colour-sense of birds and mammals may have gone on developing side by side; each plant surviving in proportion as its seeds grew more and more distinctive, and each animal, in turn, standing a better chance of food in proportion as its discrimination of such seeds grew more and more acute. But as there are excellent reasons for crediting fishes and reptiles also with a high faculty for the perception of colour, it may be safer to conclude that the sense was inherited by birds and mammals from our common vertebrate progenitors, being only quickened and intensified by the reactive influence of fruits.

Yet it must be remembered that the earliest fruit-eaters, though they might find the scarlet, crimson, or purple coats of their food an aid to

discrimination in the primæval forests, would not necessarily derive any pleasure from the stimulation thus afforded. That pleasure has been slowly begotten in all frugivorous races by the constant use of these particular nerves in the search for food, which has at last produced in them a calibre and a sensitiveness answering pleasurably to the appropriate stimulation. Just as the peach, which a dog would reject, has become delicious to our sense of taste; just as the pineapple, at which he would sniff unconcernedly, has become exquisite to our sense of smell; so the pure tints of the plum, the orange, the mango, and the pomegranate, which he would disregard, have become lovely to our sense of colour. And, further still, just as we transfer the tastes formed in the first two cases to the sweetmeats of the East, or to the violets, hyacinths, and heliotropes of our gardens; so do we transfer the taste formed in the third case to our gorgeous peonies, roses, dahlias, crocuses, tiger-lilies, and chrysanthemums; to our silks, satins, damasks, and textile fabrics generally; to our vases, our mosaics, our painted windows, our frescoed walls, our Academies, our Louvres, and our Vaticans. Even as we put sugar and spices into insipid dishes to gratify the gustatory nerves, whose sensibility was originally developed by the savour of tropical fruits, so do we put red, blue, and purple into our pottery, our decoration, and our painting to gratify the visual nerves, whose sensibility was originally developed by the rich tint of grapes and strawberries, star-apples and oranges.

And here again, as in the case of flowers, the feeling once aroused has found for itself new objects in the voluntary selection of beautiful mates—that is to say, of mates whose colouring gratified the rising delight in pure tints. The taste formed upon blossoms produced, by its reaction, crimson butterflies and burnished beetles, the sun-birds of the East and the humming-birds of the West. So, too, the taste formed upon fruits produced, by a like reaction, parrots, cockatoos, toucans, birds of paradise, nutmeg pigeons, and a thousand other tropical creatures of exquisite plumage and delicate form. As we mount up through the mammalian series, we scarcely come upon any hues brighter than dull brown or tawny yellow among the marsupials, the carnivores, the ruminants, or the thick-skinned beasts; but when we arrive at the seed-eating classes, such as the rodents, the bats, and the quadrumana, we find a profusion of colour in many squirrels, flying-foxes, and monkeys; while Mr. Darwin does not hesitate in attributing to the same selective action the rosy cheeks, pearly teeth, blue eyes, and golden hair of the human species.

Nor is it only in the choice of mates that the nascent taste for colour displays itself. Even below the limits of humanity bright-hued objects afford a passing pleasure to more than one æsthetically-endowed species. Monkeys love to pull crimson flowers in pieces, dart in pursuit of brilliant tropical birds, and are attracted by the sight of red or yellow rags. Those queer little creatures, the bower birds, carry the same feel-

ing a step further by collecting fragments of brilliantly-coloured objects to decorate their gaudy meeting-places. But when we reach the race of man, we find the love of colour producing far more conspicuous secondary results. The savage daubs his body with red or blue paint, and plants his garden plot with the scarlet hibiscus or the purple bougainvillia. Soon, with the rise of pottery and cloth-making, he learns the use of pigments and the art of dyeing. Next, painting proper follows, with all the decorative appliances of Egypt, India, China, and Japan, until at last our whole life comes to be passed in the midst of clothing and furniture, wall-papers and carpets, books and ornaments, vases and tiles, statuettes and pictures, every one of which has been specially prepared with dyes or pigments, to gratify the feeling originally derived from the contemplation of woodland berries by prehistoric man, or his frugivorous ancestors. And all these varied objects of civilised life may be traced back directly to the reaction of coloured fruits upon the structure of the mammalian eye.

What a splendid and a noble prospect for humanity in its future evolutions may we not find in this thought, that from the coarse animal pleasure of beholding food mankind has already developed, through delicate gradations, our modern disinterested love for the glories of sunset and the melting shades of ocean, for the gorgeous pageantry of summer flowers, and the dying beauty of autumn leaves, for the exquisite harmony which reposes on the canvas of Titian, and the golden haze which glimmers over the dreamy visions of Turner! If man, base as he yet is, can nevertheless rise to-day in his highest moments so far above his sensuous self, what may he not hope to achieve hereafter, under the hallowing influence of those chaster and purer aspirations which are welling up within him even now toward the perfect day!

G. A.

Lessing.

THERE seems to be a good deal of whimsicality in the decrees of those powers, whoever they may be, that preside over the destinies of writers. For nearly one hundred years English readers have been content to know little or nothing of Lessing. Some of his theological writings have no doubt been read by a few, while his *Laokoon* has long been a favourite with a still smaller number of thoughtful artists. Yet of the man himself, and of his rich and varied work, we have been content to remain utterly ignorant. Oddly enough, after this long period of neglect, we begin to be very curious; and almost simultaneously our curiosity is gratified by the appearance of two biographies, the full and scholarly work of Mr. Sime and the highly interesting volume of Miss Zimmern.

It is more easy to account for the present awakening of interest than for the past neglect. Lessing has long been one of the most revered of names to Germans. As Hettner says, "dem Deutschen geht das Herz auf, wenn er von Lessing redet." The Lessing literature in Germany is in itself a considerable study. This being so, one might be sure that, with our present growing interest in German writers, an adequate account of Lessing would soon be provided.

But how comes it that we have so long neglected Lessing? One would have said that of all Germans Lessing has most to recommend him to English sympathies. He is least German in those qualities which we are wont to think characteristic of that nation, namely, sentimentality and misty profundity. The strong, healthy nature of his intellect, and the fine qualities of his style, would, one supposes, be admirably adapted to attract and impress English readers.

One or two conjectural reasons may be given for this curious indifference. First of all, Lessing was a pioneer, and as such has had to pay the penalty of being overlooked in favour of those who carried his work to a brilliant completion. So large a part of his writings was negative and destructive, a mere clearing of the ground for the unimpeded play of constructive genius. A second reason may be found in the width and variety of his work. Lessing was always striking out new paths for his restless intellectual activity, and there are few who have the qualifications requisite for an adequate appreciation of his many-sided mind. Again, the biographical interest of the subject is not conspicuous and obvious. Lessing's life was from first to last a severe struggle, not only with ignorance and prejudice, but with obstructive material circumstance. Now to the common mind

the strenuous and manly struggle of a Lessing, at every stage of his course impeded and cramped, though never thwarted, has less charm than the serene life of a Goethe, smiled on by fortune from the first, breathing of ample content, and reflecting the lustre of aristocratic surroundings. With most persons the capability of admiring a manly and invincible spirit, opposing itself to hostile circumstances, is exceedingly limited; an harmonious existence pleases more than a discordant. To this it must be added that Lessing's temperament and character offer no exceptional and striking features of the quaint and picturesque order. Lessing's was essentially a well-balanced nature answering to the Greek ideal of moderation and harmony; and such characters, however valuable, do not exactly serve as tempting material for popular biography.

Lessing's life was comparatively uneventful. He was born at Camenz, in Saxony, in 1729. His father was a Lutheran clergyman, and one of a line of pastors who appear to have combined a moderate orthodoxy with an unusual measure of culture. Lessing's mother, too, came from a clerical family, so that he was born into the very atmosphere of theology. His home was, as might be expected, a strict one, very much resembling, in its rigorous discipline, those Scotch Calvinistic houses which Mr. G. MacDonald has described for us. Yet the restraints imposed were not unendurable, and they proved, as in many other instances, an excellent preparatory discipline. Lessing's mother was not a striking figure, only a worthy but somewhat commonplace example of the proper clergyman's daughter. The father, on the other hand, was a man of ripe scholarship and of exceptional breadth, who, if we are to believe Adolf Stahr, served Lessing to some extent as the model of his finest dramatic creation, *Nathan the Wise*.

Young Gotthold was of course destined to prolong the race of learned divines. He was sent to a half-monastic school, the Institution of St. Afra, in Meissen, which laid itself out to prepare youths for the clerical career. But his thoughts went astray after more profane objects. He did indeed satisfy his father's sentiment for accurate scholarship, only his classical studies did not, as they should have done, breed in him a holy contempt of pagan morality, and so prepare the way for Christian dogmatic instruction. Lessing forgot all about theology in the new and stirring world opened up by Plautus and Terence. He was fortunate enough to find in this somewhat dreary retreat a teacher who guided his awakening instinct for literature. Lessing showed the usual precocity of great men, and while at Meissen, between the age of twelve and of seventeen, attempted a number of odes, plays, and essays. Of these, the most remarkable, perhaps, as illustrating the early development of his leading ideas, is the essay in which he sought to refute the old woman's notion that times tend to get worse. He showed at this early period both a healthy impulse of self-criticism and a decided leaning to dramatic production by writing a comedy, "*The Young Scholar*," in which he

unsparingly ridiculed the pedantry of the mere student, who knows nothing of real life.

At seventeen Lessing was sent to the University of Leipzig, to study theology. He was now, however, far too independent to allow his studies to be chosen for him. The teaching of the University did not inspire him with much reverence, and he appears to have been a very irregular frequenter of the lecture-rooms. One almost fancies he must have been set down by his fellow-students as decidedly too priggish. What he most enjoyed in the way of University advantages was the debates or disputations which were originated by one of his professors, and which at once answered to and quickened his deep-seated love of a dialectic collision of ideas. For the rest, Lessing discovered that books do not provide a complete culture, and, much to his pious parents' alarm, began to learn the accomplishments of dancing and fencing, and to see something of the variegated life of a large town. In Leipzig he could actually behold what he had dreamt of when reading Latin comedies at St. Afra, a stage spectacle; and the theatre now became his most engrossing interest. A talented actress made a *protégé* of him, and under her inspiring influence he betook himself to play-writing.

Stahr draws an interesting parallel between the university life of Lessing and of Goethe. Both went to Leipzig at the age of seventeen, both had the determination to secure a wide culture in opposition to their parents' wishes, and both made university lectures a secondary thing in comparison with social culture. Here, however, the resemblance ceases. While Lessing's thorough intellectual discipline at St. Afra enabled him when at Leipzig to carry on his reading independently, Goethe's years spent at the university were so much lost time, as far as study was concerned. A more striking difference marks their introduction to social life. The young Frankfort patrician, who brought with him letters of introduction to the best houses in Leipzig, had a widely-different view of life from that which was vouchsafed to the poor parson's lad, "to whom, after his five years' monastic solitude, the world and life were almost more unfamiliar than the inside of the moon."

Lessing's way of looking at the proper end of university life could not but shock his somewhat puritanic parents. It must be added that his new tastes were a little out of proportion to the capacity of his purse. Only one thing could result from this state of things—perfect independence of his father; and this Lessing secured by leaving the university and beginning life, at the age of nineteen, as a journalist in Berlin.

Berlin was just then not without its attractions for an aspiring literary genius. Frederick the Great was doing his best to make his capital a centre of culture, though he supposed that this was only possible by introducing French ideas and manners. As Mr. Sime observes, Berlin was at this time "a sort of satellite to Paris, feebly reflecting its splendour." Still there was a certain fashion of culture involving some degree of interest in ideas, and Lessing threw himself

heart and soul into the new current of literary activity. He found little encouragement to continue his dramatic compositions, and he turned instead to dramatic and literary criticism, a field which just then sadly wanted tilling. A noteworthy incident of this first visit to Berlin was his quarrel with Voltaire, which throws a curious light on the personal characters of the two men.

Although his writings at once made a mark, Lessing had self-restraint enough to suspend literary work for a while, in order to deepen and widen his studies. This he sought to accomplish in the quiet university town of Wittenberg. Here, in the High School of Luther, he was naturally drawn to the study of theology, and from this period date his first essays in theological discussions—namely, those "Vindications" in which he undertook to defend certain writers of the time of the Reformation against the misrepresentations of later critics.

On his return to Berlin, at the age of twenty-three, Lessing displayed a much riper literary faculty. Of the writings of this period mention must be made of the crushing bit of criticism, *A Vade Mecum for Herr Sam. Gotth. Lange*, in which the accurate student of classic literature finely expresses his contempt for a dull and unintelligent reading of his favourite Horace. Lessing now felt strong enough to renew his dramatic attempts, and in *Miss Sara Sampson* he broke with the reigning French traditions, and produced a drama of middle-class life, after the model of Lillo's *George Barnwell*.

This period of rapidly-developing productivity seems to have been a happy one in other respects. The tedious objections of too solicitous parents gradually ceased, while in a new group of friends Lessing found ample sympathy and refreshment. In men like Moses Mendelssohn and Frederick Nicolai, Lessing was happy enough to meet with congenial and appreciative natures, though it must be confessed that they were hardly of an intellectual stature to survey all Lessing's comprehensive aims. Yet while Lessing's work was thus recognized by the competent few, it did not pay, and he made another venture in dramatic production in Leipzig, his old university town. His sojourn happened to synchronise with the outbreak of the Seven Years' War, an event which might, one supposes, easily have tried the amicable relations between the Saxon Lessing and his Prussian acquaintance. Lessing, however, proved himself superior to all narrow political partisanship, and even incurred the anger of his fellow-citizens by associating with the Prussian officers whom the war brought into the town. From Leipzig he once more returned to Berlin, at the age of twenty-nine. The first fruit of his maturer studies and fuller experience was the celebrated *Literary Letters*. These letters, as Mr. Sime points out, exactly hit the prevailing temper of the hour. Frederick's sturdy and spirited policy had awakened a new sense of national life in Prussia, and Lessing's *Letters*, by setting the key of a higher style of poetic composition, well harmonised with the tendencies of the time.

With all his success, Lessing found literature something of a drudgery, and he longed for the freedom and repose which come of a material sufficiency. An opportunity of securing this soon occurred in the shape of a proposal to accompany, as secretary, a certain General von Tauentzien to Breslau, where he was appointed to direct the Silesian mint. By accepting this post, Lessing secured the means of carrying out his literary plans with a certain degree of comfort; he also obtained an excellent opportunity of widening his knowledge of men and manners. At Breslau Lessing mixed freely in the jovial society of actors of the rougher sort and of officers. He also acquired a curious passion for gambling. Two very natural results followed: his literary friends gave him up for lost; and his family looked on him as a prosperous young man whose growing wealth was providentially destined to supply all their pecuniary deficiencies. Lessing had to dispel each of these illusions. Though he generously responded to the demands of his family, he gave them to understand that he intended to employ his earnings in the main upon himself, more especially by collecting a copious library. It must be added that Lessing's high feeling of integrity deterred him from making all the profit which his connection with minting operations would have rendered possible to less scrupulous men. To his Berlin friends he was soon able to give a substantial proof that his dissipations had not interfered with his productivity. Both *Minna von Barnhelm*, Lessing's cleverest drama, and the *Laokoon*, his finest prose work, were mostly written during this time. As Stahr observes, both of these works express the cheerful and careless mood in which Lessing found himself at Breslau.

After this five years' sojourn in Breslau, Lessing once more repaired to Berlin with the hope of securing the vacant post of royal librarian. The patron of Voltaire and French literature, who had the meanest idea of German writers, looked on Lessing as but one more of the unpolished pedants, and persistently refused to give him the post. Little wonder that Lessing once more turned his back on Berlin as soon as a new field of labour presented itself to view. Some cultivated Hamburg merchants at this time entertained the estimable idea of founding a national theatre in their well-to-do city. Lessing was invited to take part in the scheme by writing a series of plays. This offer he declined, but he consented to take part in the undertaking as general adviser and as critic. The theatre was actually started, and Lessing began his work, but the enterprise soon broke down. The comfortable and contented Hamburghers did not appreciate these praiseworthy efforts to instruct them in the mysteries of the higher art, while the opposition of the clergy presented a direct obstacle to the success of the undertaking. The ambitious theatre only succeeded in preserving its existence for nine months. Yet short as was the period of Lessing's official activity, it bore no less valuable fruit than the two volumes known as the *Hamburg Dramaturgy*.

For Lessing himself this visit to Hamburg was of consequence, since

it introduced him to the woman in whom he was to find the deepest sympathy that ever gladdened his life. It looks indeed, at first, as though Lessing was singularly happy in his social surroundings at Hamburg, for after the National Theatre project had collapsed, he stayed on three years in this bright and lively commercial town. Yet Lessing was far from being as gay and contented as in the Breslau days. The failure of the National Theatre vexed and irritated him. He felt himself once more thrown on the uncertainties of a purely literary life. His chief production during this period was the *Antiquarian Letters*, in which he met and demolished certain criticisms on the *Laokoon* by one Klotz. These letters, which are the bitterest of all Lessing's bitter writings, indicate plainly enough the exasperated temper of those Hamburg days.

At last the long-sought official recognition came, in no very magnificent shape truly, and not from the quarter whence he had expected it. At the court of Brunswick, in Lessing's time, there was something of that Mæcenas-like spirit of patronage for literature and art which afterwards gave to Weimar a European celebrity. Lessing's claims found recognition here, and he was invited by the Hereditary Prince to accept the post of librarian at the Wolfenbüttel Library—the Bibliotheca Augusta, of which Leibnitz had once been the director—with a salary of 600 thalers (90*l.*), free lodging and firing. The appointment was created specially for Lessing. He was not required to do the ordinary duties of a librarian, but simply to investigate the collection and to bring to light some of its hidden treasures.

The post, one would suppose, had much to recommend it to a man of Lessing's tastes, and it provided at least a maintenance; yet it brought him little satisfaction. He felt the dreariness of the sleepy old town and superseded capital. Accustomed to ample social intercourse of the brightest sort, and to a stimulating contact with the stir of life, Lessing chafed and fretted in his Wolfenbüttel cage. Not only so, having but little business capacity in the ordering of his affairs, Lessing was quite unable, even in these quiet surroundings, to keep out of debt. All this, together with the hard work of overhauling the contents of the library, wearied him. He once excused his omission to take leave of a friend when returning to Wolfenbüttel, by saying, "It is not worth while to bid farewell when one dies, or travels from Brunswick to Wolfenbüttel!" Later on, he complained that the dust of books was settling on his nerves.

New sources of anxiety opened up in connection with his growing affection for Eva König, the widow of a Hamburg friend, to whom he betrothed himself at the age of forty-two. His engagement made him the more concerned to better his position; and his patron appears to have added to his troubles by holding out expectations which he failed to satisfy. Lessing was evidently of too independent a spirit to make a good *protégé* to a somewhat exacting prince, and the narrative of his

tedious disputes with his patron reminds one of the contentions between the high-spirited young Mozart and the Archbishop of Salzburg. Lessing's new friend proved to be eminently fitted to soothe and to guide his proud and sensitive nature, and the correspondence of these unromantic lovers illustrates in a striking manner the kind of help which a wise, skilful, and sympathetic woman is able to give to a man who is intellectually far above her.

Lessing's official duties seem to have taken a good deal of his time, for he produced but little during these first years of his residence in Wolfenbüttel. Of these writings, the most important is the tragedy, *Emilia Galotti*, which had been begun some years before. His researches in the library led to his continuing his series of *Vindications*.

At length, after many delays, trials, and doubts, the warm-hearted friends were united, and, for awhile, the broken and fretted current of Lessing's life flowed smoothly in deep and silent channels. The picture of his domestic life, as left by relatives and friends, is very charming, and forms a delightful contrast to the rest of the narrative. Here are one or two extracts from Miss Zimmern's pleasant description of Lessing's home :—

> His house was appointed with the same unostentatious elegance that appeared in his dress. . . . It was his habit to rise about six, and work in his study for some hours, and only when writing did he allow himself to sit crookedly or to wear a loose coat. In due time he would go and wake the children. If he had no duties at the library, he would write till dinner; if he had, he would dress carefully after breakfast, and repair to his post. The dinner-hour was half-past twelve, and it rarely happened but Lessing brought in some unexpected guests who had been visiting the library or the librarian, for he had become a celebrity, and people travelled far and wide to speak to him or see him. "Never mind if there is not enough to eat," he would say to his wife, when such invasions exceeded bounds, "make up with bacon and eggs." And his wife, who was as hospitable as he, invariably gave the visitors a hearty welcome. . . . Cheerful talk he held the best condiment to a meal, and his jokes and heartiest laughter were reserved for home. His afternoons he commonly devoted to recreation and a short walk. At nine a frugal supper was served, at which, again, visitors were often present. These were usually more intimate friends, with whom Lessing would afterwards play a game of his favourite chess, sucking an empty pipe if smokers were present, to appear sociable. . . . Between ten and eleven he went to bed, enjoying a deep sleep that never forsook him, and which, according to his account, was always dreamless.

This forcibly reminds one of the receptions given by two other German celebrities to their casual visitors. The simple yet graceful bearing of the Wolfenbüttel host seems to come midway between the quaint austerity of the Königsberg philosopher and the kingly ease and elegance of the Weimar minister-poet.

This contented and serene existence had, however, but a short duration. When only fifteen months had flown, Lessing's wife, together with the child she had for a few hours entrusted to him, was snatched from his tenacious arms. He bore himself under this staggering blow with wonderful self-control. Even to his favourite brother he did not give vent

to his emotion; he could only exclaim, "My wife is dead! and I have now gone through this experience also. I am glad that many more such experiences cannot be in store for me." That this is not callousness may be seen by a reference to another letter, in which there is one of the most powerful and perfectly-restrained expressions of the bitterness of grief to be found in all literature:—

> My pleasure was but brief, and I lost him so unwillingly, this son! For he had so much understanding! so much understanding! Do not suppose that the few hours of my fatherhood have made me an ape of a father. I know what I say. Was it not understanding that they had to drag him into the world with iron tongs?—that he so soon suspected the evil of it? Was it not understanding that he seized the first opportunity to get away from it? And the little rascal tears his mother from me with him!

Lessing survived his wife only three years, laying down his well-worn tools at the early age of fifty-two. These last years, which, though sad enough, gave new proof of Lessing's self-control and instinct of fidelity to the claims of life, are eventful only with respect to his literary work. His occupations in the old library had naturally led to the study of theological questions, and henceforth his literary activity was directed to the furtherance of what he considered to be sounder and juster views of Christianity and of religion in general. The celebrated *Wolfenbüttel Fragments* and the more familiar dramatic poem, *Nathan the Wise*, alike illustrate these aims.

Our brief sketch of Lessing's life may suffice to show that there was much in the man to command admiration. To those who will look closely at him, he presents many a rare and noble trait, and appears in the end as one of the worthiest and at the same time one of the most engaging characters. Nothing can be more refreshing and stimulating than to stand awhile in imagination in presence of this ever-hopeful, ever-aspiring nature. Lessing (though a learner from Leibnitz) was by no means an unreflecting optimist. We have already quoted one expression of a deep and bitter sense of life's evil, and his writings contain many remarks on life and happiness pitched in the Voltairian key, as, for example:—"It certainly requires art to persuade ourselves that we are happy, but then in what else does happiness consist than in such self-persuasion?" Yet, at bottom, Lessing was soundly convinced of the desirability of life. The well-known passage in which he sets the pursuit of truth above its attainment illustrates what was the real value of existence to him. With his eager, intellectual nature life could only be a good so long as it left him free to struggle towards the light. Lessing had a passion, and this passion necessarily ennobled life.

This enthusiasm for discovery throws light on Lessing's disposition to combat. This has been generally regarded as excessive. Yet it must be remembered that truth can only be reached through a frequent collision of ideas, and that an ardent aspiration for truth is pretty

certain to assume the form of a vigorous opposition to error. At the same time one may readily admit that Lessing keenly enjoyed the excitement of intellectual contest much as he enjoyed gambling, of which he somewhere says, "Tous les gens d'esprit aiment le jeu à la folie!" The tension of battle seemed necessary to excite all the vital force of Lessing's intellectual fibres.

What most strikes one in Lessing is his perfect self-control, a quality which enabled him to indulge in forms of excitement which would have been dangerous to weaker men. Thus when at Breslau he threw himself into a round of social gaieties; yet he always made these subordinate to his dominant purposes. It may perhaps be thought that Lessing was not naturally of an emotional temperament, and that, consequently, his self-restraint was an easy matter. It is perfectly true that he was defective in certain kinds of feeling. Thus he seems to have had no love of natural scenery, and all he tells us about music points to the conclusion that this art did not exert on him its deepest emotional spell. Yet Lessing had deep and tender feelings, which broke out now and again into expression, as in the short but eloquent lament over the loss of his gallant and cultivated friend Kleist. He only kept these emotions under due restriction, carefully avoiding every appearance of excessive feeling or sentimentality. In this respect Lessing reminds one of J. S. Mill, a writer who seems cold to the casual and superficial reader, but who discloses intense forces of emotion to those who look into his words long and studiously.

One of the greatest charms of Lessing's character is the absence of all self-consciousness, of all feeble *amour propre*. His absorption in his objective aims saved him from this. Moreover, his genial and kindly humour served as a second safeguard against this weakness. Lessing frequently tells us that there is no better preservative against the weaknesses and petty vices of human nature than laughter, and his own character illustrates the truth of this. His keen sense of the ludicrous which impartially played about his own character as well as that of others, saved him from a morbid brooding on himself even in his worst hours of depression, and helped to give to his character that element of moderation and proportion which, as we have remarked, is essentially Greek.

And now let us glance at Lessing's work in its permanent worth. This has been estimated very differently by different critics. While some have regarded his writings as of temporary value only, others would rank his larger productions among the best European classics. The true opinion seems to be that, while Lessing wrote much that had only a fugitive significance and utility, he enriched his literature with some of the most delightful and instructive of its masterpieces. In his writings the permanent and the transitory are no doubt often mixed up, but it is easy to extricate the more enduring elements.

The first thing that strikes the student of Lessing is the breadth and

variety of his work. As Hettner says, with a pardonable touch of national vanity, "Lessing stood in the first rank in all the larger struggles of development through which the German people became the most cultivated, and, intellectually, the freest people of the earth." Lessing relaid the foundations of literary criticism, and applied his principles, with the help of accurate scholarship, not only to classic writers, but also to the chief modern literatures. He contributed important elements to æsthetic theory, more especially the laws of poetry and of the visual arts. He did much to fashion the modern and more enlightened style of theological discussion. He seized, more fully than his predecessors, and gave clear expression to, some of our present conceptions of human history. In addition to all this, he produced a number of dramas, which claim a place among the great works of German literature.

Yet with all this wealth and variety of intellectual achievement, the writings of Lessing are united by one or two leading intentions. One might almost say that they all subserve one purpose, that of clear definition. To substitute lucid ideas for obscure ones, to illustrate accuracy of knowledge and soundness of argument in vivid contrast to their opposites, this aim shines through all his writings. It appears in one of his earliest essays, *Pope a Metaphysician*, a clever bit of satire, sent in to the Berlin Academy of Sciences on their offering a prize for a paper on Pope's *Metaphysical System*. Lessing's best literary criticism was plainly directed to this same end. His æsthetic construction, too, aimed at discriminating between confused regions of art, and at separating the true classic conception from the ignorant modern versions under which it had been buried. A like aim to distinguish between what is essential and non-essential appears in his theological writings. Finally, it may be said that even his dramatic creations had as their object the setting-up of a true and faithful picture of human nature over against the inaccurate representations then in vogue. Thus there is a continuity in Lessing's varied work, each new branch being but the following out into a fresh region of the same dominant intellectual impulses.

Of Lessing's real magnitude we can only judge when we study his writings in connection with the previous condition of German literature. Each of the English biographies helps one to understand this aspect of Lessing's work. The reader feels that much excuse is to be made for Frederick the Great when he refused Lessing an appointment, on the ground that he was but one more example of the uncouth German pedant. Before Lessing there was hardly such a thing as good German writing, and Frederick showed good taste in going to French sources for his ideas and his culture. Even we, at this far-off point of view, feel something oppressive and choking in the atmosphere surrounding Klopstock and his weaker admirers, and Gottsched and his school, not to speak of the smaller fry, whose names have only come down to us because Lessing had occasion to take notice of them. The fact is, that

the German people, at the time Lessing appeared, had no culture, though the aspiration for it was arising and showing itself in the taste of a few for French literature.

More than this, Lessing had to contend not only with the inertia resulting from a long-reigning intellectual stagnation, but also with active opposition. His chief obstacle was the clergy, who were the foes not only of toleration in religion, but also of the theatre, the domain of art dearest to Lessing. The stage (says Adolf Stahr) was at that time a real horror to all pious minds, and even in the domain of the king of the Illumination the clergy preached from their pulpits against Peter Hülferding, the first Prussian founder of a theatre, who had been privileged by the king himself upon his accession to the throne.

In spite of these enormous difficulties, Lessing succeeded in awakening a genuine feeling for literature, and in setting the fashion of a higher kind of production. His work was of necessity to a large extent purely critical and destructive. Of this we need not speak. It has its interest for every student of literature, and even to others the sulphurous air of battle which surrounds nearly all of Lessing's critical writings will lend to these a certain fascination. Yet its intrinsic value has disappeared. This remark applies to much of the excellent work contained in the literary and antiquarian letters. Not that these and similar writings are simply negative in their results. The critical and the productive impulses were too intimately blended in Lessing for him to write anything that was simply destructive. And the writings just referred to must always be remarkable as one of the first contributions to the modern historical mode of appreciation. It is only because negative criticism preponderates in these works that their permanent value is so slight.

It is quite otherwise with Lessing's distinctly constructive works—that is to say, those in which the elucidation of correct principles preponderates over destructive criticism. Their value is great, even for us of to-day, with our fuller knowledge and more mature capacity of judgment.

To Lessing the highest form of literature was the drama, and his most elaborate constructive criticism has to do with this department of art. The results of his reading and reflection are embodied in the *Hamburg Dramaturgy*, a work of which English readers have, up to now, known little, if anything, since the only account of it in our literature is contained in a recent volume of miscellaneous essays (by Mr. J. Sully). In this series of papers Lessing did much to define the aims of true dramatic art. Although the ostensible purpose was a temporary one—namely, to overthrow the influence of the French drama and its theory, and to re-expound the doctrine contained in Aristotle's *Poetics*—it contains much original reflection, and is an important contribution to æsthetic theory. In it may be found some of the most pregnant suggestions respecting the art of good acting. What, for instance, can

be finer than these observations on the different modes of delivering moral reflections?—

If the situation is quiet, the mind of the speaker should seem to supply itself, through the moral truth, with a new impetus; he should appear to make general remarks on its happiness or its duties, simply for the purpose of enjoying this happiness the more intensely, or of observing these duties the more willingly through the very fact of this universality. Should the situation, however, be an agitating one, the spectator should feel that the speaker is recovering himself, by help of the moral reflection, from his momentary self-forgetfulness. The spectator should see that the speaker is desirous of giving to his passions the appearance of reason, and to his stormy exclamations the aspect of deliberate conclusions.

What Lessing did in the *Dramaturgy* to define and illustrate the principles of dramatic poetry is of very unequal value. To a large extent this has worth only as a clearing up of the meaning of Aristotle. Thus Lessing seeks to show, in opposition to French writers, that the fear and pity—which, according to Aristotle, are the proper effects of tragedy—are not separate moods, either of which can be produced by its appropriate kind of tragic action, but two aspects of one mood, both of which are necessarily excited in the spectator by every great tragedy. Lessing did good service, too, in giving to the classic "unities" an intelligible meaning. Yet in this part of his work our author hardly did more than clear the ground of false and inadequate views.

It is plain that Lessing's mind is here hampered by a too exclusive consideration of the Greek drama. It is, no doubt, true that he knew Shakspeare as well as many a later English dramatist, and that the *Dramaturgy* first made known to Germans England's greatest poet. Yet we are disposed to side with Hettner rather than with Guhrauer and Stahr, and to say that so far from "reconciling the idea of romantic poetry with the classic notion of beauty," Lessing "never penetrated into the innermost secret of Shakspeare," but "just because both Shakspeare and antique tragedy were equally removed from the French drama, identified these two." As Hettner and others have shown, what Lessing missed seeing in the modern drama is the relation of the fault or defect of character in the tragic hero to the resulting catastrophe. Lessing took Aristotle's view of this moral defect as a feature of character necessary to the production in the spectator of fear and pity; he did not see that now we have done away with supernatural agencies and the *Deus ex machinâ*, a certain element of wrong-doing is the necessary precondition of a natural and self-sufficient tragic action.

All this we may admit, and much more on which Mr. Sime insists. Yet, with its many defects, and mere fragment as it is, Lessing's *Hamburg Dramaturgy* is full of ripe reflection and pregnant suggestion. Nobody who wants to have a thorough understanding of the principles of the drama can afford to leave it unread. Although it is throughout Aristotelian in its spirit and aim—for Lessing's accurate and thoroughly scientific mind was in close sympathy with the most scientific Greek intellect—it is anything but a mere reproduction of Aristotle's ideas.

It carries on and expands Aristotle's method of analysis, and ever and again reaches unforeseen results.

Among the most valuable of these is the clear separation of the ends of art and morality. Lessing's thoroughly Greek moderation showed itself in nothing more conspicuously than in his equal respect for liberty and correctness in art. In the *Dramaturgy*, each of these aims is manifest. While he insists on certain inviolable principles of dramatic art, he claims for her perfect freedom from ethical control. The purification (*κάθαρσις*) which tragedy effects is not moral; it is simply the correction of an excess or deficiency of emotion. So the laughter of comedy (*Lachen*) is perfectly distinct from the contemptuous ridicule (*Verlachen*) which is punitive, and aims at a moral effect. Indirectly, indeed, by bringing about a healthy state of feeling, the drama is capable of moralising the spectator; but this effect must never be consciously aimed at by the poet.

The *Dramaturgy* is a fragment, and far from satisfying on the topics it touches. The *Laokoon*, on the other hand, though, strictly speaking, a fragment too, is more systematic and complete, as far as it goes. This work is better known to English readers, and we need not dwell long on its features.

Here, again, we are impressed by the dominant intellectual spirit of the man. The purpose of Lessing is clearly to distinguish, to mark off more sharply the ends of visual art and poetry, and, in so doing, to claim a greater liberty of action for his favourite art. We do not now regard poetry as a substitute for direct pictorial representation of visible objects, even though, perhaps, we are rather too fond of talking about "word-painting." Hence some of the teaching of the *Laokoon* has lost its meaning and purpose. Yet, as a whole, this work must remain a permanent prose classic. It will owe its immortality, first of all, perhaps, to its delightful form, to that method of elucidating general principles from concrete instances which has much the same charm that belongs to George Eliot's psychological treatment of the novel. In addition to this, the *Laokoon*, with all its faults, is a lasting contribution to æsthetic theory. As a systematic attempt to show how the aims of the different arts are limited by the medium they employ, Lessing's work marks a new epoch in the science of criticism.* Moreover, in his handling of the nature and aims of poetry, the art he knew perfectly, Lessing is always right, and generally richly instructive. In his interpretation of Homer and Virgil he invariably shows true poetic feeling and analytic penetration.

It is only when he takes up "painting" (*die Malerei*)—under which term he oddly enough lumps together sculpture and painting—that

* The originality of Lessing's work is hardly affected by the fact referred to by Hettner, that its leading idea is foreshadowed by Moses Mendelssohn in his Essay *Betrachtungen über die Quellen und die Verbindungen der schönen Künste.*

Lessing betrays defective knowledge and an unsteady hand. All this is acknowledged by his most ardent admirers, not excepting Stahr himself. Mr. Sime has gathered up the most forcible objections urged by modern critics against Lessing's definition of the visual arts. All must admit that if the critic's views of the drama were warped by a too exclusive attention to Greek models, his theory of sculpture and painting was still more marred by this narrowness of vision. As Hettner remarks, all that Lessing says about painting, in its proper sense, is based on the fragmentary knowledge of classic art derivable from extant mural decorations, more especially those of Pompeii. His theory of pictorial art is sufficiently condemned by the fact that he rejects landscape-painting, genre, portraiture, and the greater part of historical painting, as wanting in the essentials of true ideal art. Even his theory of sculpture, as based on Greek works, suffers from a want of knowledge respecting the various periods and phases of Greek art.

Here, then, Lessing seems, for once, to contradict his true aim, the greatest possible liberty of art. Here the feeling for correctness is clearly in excess of the love of freedom. How are we to account for this? The answer is easy. Lessing, in this instance, ventured into a field that was all but unknown to him. He lacked the cultivated eye both for the manifold beauty of Nature and for the superb achievements of modern pictorial art. Hettner observes that while Lessing's notes and letters, written during his travels in Italy—long after the *Laokoon* was published—are full of allusions to libraries, &c., they make no reference to natural scenery or to pictures. More than this, Lessing ventured to theorise about art with the scantiest means at his disposal. As Nicolai observed, the critic for once forgot his wholesome rule of starting from a basis of experience, from some actual work of art. Stahr says it is doubtful whether Lessing had seen even a *cast* of the very group about which the *Laokoon* is written. His means of studying the various developments of Greek plastic art were very meagre. The wonder is, that with all these disqualifications and hindrances Lessing was able to do what he did.

And Lessing did accomplish something even for the better understanding of visual art. This is proved well enough by the fact that among painters and sculptors—English as well as German—are to be found some of the most assiduous readers of Lessing. A work penned by one, not himself an artist or endowed with special visual sensibility, and with the most inadequate knowledge of the details of art, has nevertheless been recognised by the competent few as a real contribution to art-theory. In one sense, then, one may say that the *Laokoon* is Lessing's greatest success. It proves the exceeding versatility and subtlety of his mind, and its high degree of general feeling for artistic beauty. Lessing tried to guess what visual art ought to be according to his general principles, and he was very nearly right.

Lessing's theory does, in spite of its narrow basis, roughly lay down

certain broad principles which every sculptor and painter will be the better for remembering. Of these we may mention the idea that the permanent rather than the momentary supplies the best material for visual art, and that, owing to its immediate and vivid mode of presentation, this department of art is much more restricted in the admission of the gross and repellent than the poetic arts. These ideas are, no doubt, pressed too far by Lessing himself, yet they are nothing less than discoveries in æsthetic science. After all, the principles of art are not rigidly universal truths which know of no exceptions; but simply rough formulas which gather up the most common conditions of æsthetic delight. If Lessing's *Laokoon* is read in the light of this truth, we shall hardly attach the importance which Mr. Sime seems to attach to the fact that all of Lessing's rules have sometimes been violated in artistic practice.

We have spoken of Lessing's work in concrete criticism, and have followed him into the higher intellectual sphere of the general science of criticism, or the theory of the fine arts. In order to complete our survey, we should have to watch this energetic spirit soaring still higher into the region of abstract reflection, philosophy and theology. Of this side of his activity, however, the present occasion is not the one to say much.

We have seen that Lessing's literary criticism, as, for example, the masterly vindication of Horace, illustrated his ability to project himself, so to speak, on the historical plane, and to realise modes of feeling and social conditions widely different from those of his own age. This power of counteracting the effects of the historical perspective may be said to underlie our modern conceptions of human development. In Lessing, too, it became the starting-point for a thoroughly modern view of history. In *The Education of the Human Race* we have the idea expressed, in a theological guise, it is true, that man's present intellectual and moral attainments have been slowly acquired through many ages by a gradual process of growth. Lessing was hardly the first to seize the idea of human progress; a glance at Mr. Flint's *Philosophy of History* will show that; but he gave new form to this conception, and made it more like the idea of the modern evolutionist. In so doing, he prepared the way for Herder, whose principal work appeared four years after Lessing's, and for Kant and his followers.

Lessing did very little of original work in the way of abstract philosophy. His philosophical ideas were mostly derived from Leibnitz and Spinoza, the latter of whom he first made known to German thinkers. Now, in the former, the idea of development, of a gradual perfection of existence, is one of the most conspicuous features, while in Spinoza, as Mr. F. Pollock has shown, there are latent some of the radical ideas of the modern evolutionist. Little wonder, then, that Lessing now and again comes so near seizing the conception of evolution as a whole. It is easy, of course, to exaggerate the anticipations of new

ideas, and German writers are just now absurdly busy in trying to discover all the essential features of Mr. Darwin's theory of evolution in writers like Herder and Kant. It is hardly less absurd, perhaps, when Guhrauer and Stahr tell us that in Lessing's thoroughly Leibnitzian conception of the world, as unfolded in the fragment *Das Christenthum der Vernunft* and elsewhere, we have anticipated "the great principle of the modern view of nature in its universality." Yet it is none the less true that Lessing did work in the direction of our new theory of the world. This tendency appears most conspicuously in another fragment *Dass mehr als fünf Sinne für den Menschen sein können* ("That more than five senses are possible for man"). The argument is clearly based on the Leibnitzian hypothesis of simple beings or monads; it goes beyond Leibnitz, however, in seizing the idea of a gradual organic development of the race, and of the possibility of a further ascent in the degree of organisation in the future.

If the evolutionist is not a tolerant man, he ought to be. The very foundation of his doctrine is that human ideas are nothing fixed, but are in a constant state of becoming, and that every stage of this process is strictly related to organic and other conditions. The only thing about which an evolutionist should be allowed to dogmatise is the truth of the doctrine of evolution itself, though even here he must not forget that his way of conceiving the process by which things come to be what they are is closely related to his present degree of development and stage of knowledge. Lessing, as we have seen, adopted the historical view of human ideas and institutions, and his writings contain, perhaps, the finest plea for toleration ever penned. If anybody ever had clear convictions and fixed principles it was Lessing; yet this same man had a more vivid perception than any of his predecessors of the essential relativity of truth and of the dependence of human ideas on the social conditions, &c. of the time. This idea underlies his theological writings, including *The Education of the Human Race*. Lessing's theory of toleration is not systematically argued out, as is Milton's idea, yet it is a thoroughly reasoned conception. In addition to this, it received a poetic expression in *Nathan the Wise*, which has never been equalled or even approached.

The mention of this poem naturally leads us to consider Lessing in a second aspect. Of the worth of his critical and scientific thought there can be no doubt; but what are we to say of his merits as a creative poet? Lessing's claims to this title rest on his dramatic writings, for his youthful lyrics are, as Mr. Sime observes, cold and unelevated, and his epigrams (*Sinngedichte*), which he kept on writing throughout life, are lacking in originality if not in literary charm. What then are we to say of Lessing as a dramatist? Shall we take his own modest opinion of himself, expressed at the close of the *Dramaturgy*, "I am neither actor nor poet?" or shall we agree with those who rank Lessing's chief dramas among the masterpieces of art?

There is no doubt that Lessing was a critic before he was a poet.

This he knew well enough himself. Further, it is clear that his dramas, like his epigrams and fables, are consciously worked out on the basis of pre-established principles. But does it follow from this that they are to be regarded as mere grammatical exercises, added in order to illustrate general rules? This question raises interesting problems respecting the nature of poetic invention, and of its connection with reflection. Into these we cannot here enter. We may assume that good poetry, even if not the best, has been produced by this reflective kind of work, and the question is reduced to the form: "Are Lessing's dramas real works of art?"

Of these dramas only three claim our attention, viz., *Minna von Barnhelm*, *Emilia Galotti*, and *Nathan the Wise*. Of these, the first and last at least have, so far, held a distinguished place on the German stage.

If Lessing had never written anything but *Minna von Barnhelm*, he would have proved himself a dramatist of no mean order. This delightful comedy, though strictly related, as Goethe observes, to the circumstances of the time of its production, is now as fresh and impressive as when it was written. To see it well put on the German stage is one of the intellectual treats of a visit to Germany. The action is quick and stimulating, the plot sufficiently intricate and clearly developed, and the dialogue crisp and bright. It may bear comparison with some of the best English comedies of the last century. The character of Minna herself has at once the charm of Shakspeare's Portia and of Goldsmith's Miss Hardcastle; she is sensible, dignified, and admirable, yet, at the same time, gaily mischievous; and the other characters, Tellheim, Just, &c., are excellently portrayed. There is in this play no trace of an effort to construct according to fixed rule: it flows on spontaneously and is alive with true poetic inspiration.

With *Emilia von Galotti* the case is different. Here we have a modern tragedy consciously thought out in relation to the different conditions of ancient and of modern life. And the effect is decidedly a lame one. It has, no doubt, many excellences, upon which Lessing's apologist, Adolf Stahr, expands. But it lacks the characteristic excellence of modern tragedy, the presence of an unmistakable element of necessity binding together the various parts of the action and the resulting catastrophe. The best critics will hold against Stahr that the motive of the play is essentially classic, and wholly out of place in a modern tragedy. Emilia's fear—which has puzzled every critic from Goethe onwards—remains unintelligible, and yet it is only this which necessitates the closing bloody act. Both Mr. Sime and Miss Zimmern clearly point out these defects of the play.

There remains *Nathan the Wise*, a dramatic poem, written with the express purpose of setting forth a moral idea, in which dialogue preponderates over incident, and of which the *dénoûment* is uniformly condemned as prosaic and dissatisfying. What shall be said of it? Does

not Lessing here fly in the face of his own principles and subordinate art to morality?

A distinction must be drawn between inculcating a moral truth and embodying a moral idea. In *Nathan the Wise* Lessing does the latter, and not the former. His aim is to present a perfect ideal embodiment of the spirit of toleration. Is it legitimate to make the presentation of a beautiful character the aim of a drama? Everything is right in art which produces a satisfying impression, and judged in this way, *Nathan the Wise* is a powerful drama. Whoever has seen this noble character adequately represented, as, for example, by the veteran Döhring of Berlin, will admit that we have in this poem the material of a worthy dramatic impression. Art, Lessing tells us, may and should moralise us, though this ought not to be its ruling intention; and whoever reads, or better, sees *Nathan the Wise*, must be elevated in spirit by the communion with this wise and noble-hearted Jew. The Germans love this drama, and place it beside *Faust* as one of their two finest classics. Their estimate of its worth is confirmed by the judgment of more than one foreign nation. In the face of such evidence we may be sure that it is a genuine work of art, however difficult it may be to make it fit into our ordinary classifications.

In *Nathan the Wise* the diverging streams of Lessing's intellectual activity become reunited. It is the joint product of poetic impulse, critical reflection, and theological and philosophical thought. In this ideal character we have the ripest fruit of Lessing's intellectual and moral nature. In the clear-sighted Jew, with his wide knowledge of man, his calm self-restraint, his large charity, his reverence for our essential humanity as distinguished from its accidental forms, in this Nathan, who stands out from and overtops his narrow-minded race, Lessing might almost be said to give us unwittingly an enlarged image of himself as he appears against the background of a narrow and unappreciative age.

Orpheus and Eurydice.

THE LESSON OF A BAS-RELIEF.

No Greek myth has a greater charm for our mind than that of Orpheus and Eurydice. In the first place, we are told by mythologists that it is a myth of the dawn, one of those melancholy, subdued interpretations of the eternal, hopeless separation of the beautiful light of dawn and the beautiful light of day, which forms the constantly recurring tragedy of nature, as the tremendous struggle between light and darkness forms her never-ending epic, her Iliad and Nibelungenlied. There is more of the purely artistic element in these myths of the dawn than in the sun myths. Those earliest poets, primitive peoples, were interested spectators of the great battle between day and night. The sun-hero was truly their Achilles, their Siegfried. In fighting, he fought for them. When he chained up the powers of darkness the whole earth was hopeful and triumphant; when he sank down dead, a thousand dark, vague, hideous monsters were let loose on the world, filling men's hearts with sickening terror; the solar warfare was waged for and against men. The case is quite different with respect to the dawn tragedy. If men were moved by that it was from pure, disinterested sympathy. The dawn and the day were equally good and equally beautiful; the day loved the dawn, since it pursued her so closely, and the dawn must have loved the day in return, since she fled so slowly and reluctantly. Why, then, were they forbidden ever to meet? What mysterious fate condemned the one to die at the touch of the other—the beloved to elude the lover, the lover to kill the beloved? This sad, sympathising question, which the primitive peoples repeated vaguely and perhaps scarce consciously, day after day, century after century, at length received an answer. One answer, then another, then yet another, as fancy took more definite shapes. Yes, the dawn and the morning are a pair of lovers over whom hangs an irresistible, inscrutable fate—Cephalus and Procris, Alcestis and Admetus, Orpheus and Eurydice.

And this myth of Orpheus and Eurydice is to our mind the most charming of the tales born of that beautiful, disinterested sympathy for the dawn and the morning, the one in which the subdued, mysterious pathos of its origin is most perfectly preserved, in which no fault of infidelity or jealousy, no final remission of doom, breaks the melancholy unity of the story. In it we have the real equivalent of that gentle, melancholy fading away of light into light, of tint into tint. Orpheus loses Eurydice as the day loses the dawn, because he loves her; she has issued from Hades as the dawn has issued from darkness; she melts

away beneath her lover's look even as the dawn vanishes beneath the look of the day.

The origin of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice is beautiful; the myth itself, as evolved by spontaneous poetry, is still more so, and more beautiful still are the forms which have successively been lent it by the poet, the sculptor and the musician. Its own charm adds to that of its embodiments, and the charm of its embodiments adds in return to its own, a complete circle of beautiful impressions, whose mysterious, linked power it is impossible to withstand. The first link in the chain are those lines of Virgil's, for which we would willingly give ten Æneids, those grandly simple lines, half hidden in the sweet luxuriance of the fourth book of the *Georgics*, as the exquisitely chiselled fragment of some sylvan altar might lie half hidden among the long grasses and flowers, beneath the flowering bays and dark ilexes, broken shadows of boughs and yellow gleams of sunlight flickering fantastically across the clear and supple forms of the sculptured marble:

> Jamque pedem referens casus evaserat omnes,
> Redditaque Eurydice superas veniebat ad auras,
> Pone sequens, namque hanc dederat Proserpina legem,
> Quum subita incautum dementia cepit amantem,
> Ignoscenda quidem, scirent si ignoscere manes;
> Restitit, Eurydicenque suam jam luce sub ipsa,
> Immemor, heu! victusque animi respexit . . . Ibi omnis
> Effusus labor, atque immitis rupta tyranni
> Fœdera, terque fragor stagnis auditus Avernis.
> Illa: Quis et me, inquit, miseram, et te perdidit, Orpheu,
> Quis tantus furor? En iterum crudelia retro
> Fata vocant, conditque natantia lumina somnus.
> Jamque vale! Feror ingenti circumdata nocte,
> Invalidasque tibi tendens, heu! non tua, palmas.
> Dixit et ex oculis subito, ceu fumus in auras
> Commixtus tenues, fugit diversa; neque illum,
> Prensantem nequidquam umbras, et multa volentem
> Dicere, præterea vidit. . . . .

These lines suggest a bas-relief to us, because a real bas-relief is really connected with them in our mind, and this connection led to a curious little incident in our æsthetic life which is worth narrating. The bas-relief in question is a sufficiently obscure piece of Greek workmanship, one of those mediocre, much degraded works of art with which Roman galleries abound, and among which, though left unnoticed by the crowd that gathers round the Apollo, or the Augustus, or the Discobolus, we may sometimes divine a repetition of some great lost work of antiquity, some feeble reflection of lost perfection. It is let into the wall of a hall of the Villa Albani, where people throng past it in search of the rigid, pseudo-Attic Antinous. And it is as simple as the verses of Virgil: merely three figures slightly raised out of the flat, blank background, Eurydice between Orpheus and Hermes. The three figures stand distinctly apart and in a row. Orpheus touches Eurydice's veil, and her hand rests on his shoulder, while the other hand, drooping supine, is grasped by

Hermes. There is no grouping, no embracing, no violence of gesture—nay, scarcely any gesture at all; yet for us there is in it a whole drama, the whole pathos of Virgil's lines. Eurydice has returned, she is standing beneath our sun—*jam luce sub ipsa*—but for the last time. Orpheus lets his lyre sink, his head drooping towards her—*multa volens dicere*—and holds her veil, speechless. Eurydice, her head slightly bent, raises her eyes full upon him. In that look is her last long farewell:—

Jamque vale, feror ingenti circumdata nocte,
Invalidas tibi tendens, heu! non tua, palmas.

Behind Eurydice stands Hermes, the sad though youthful messenger of the dead. He gently takes her hand; it is time; he would fain stay and let the parting be delayed for ever, but he cannot. Come, we must go. Eurydice feels it; she is looking for the last time at Orpheus, her head and step are prepared to turn away—*jamque vale*. Truly this sad, sympathising messenger of Hades is a beautiful thought, softening the horror of the return to death.

And we look up again at the bas-relief, the whole story of Orpheus laying firmer hold of our imagination; but as our eyes wander wistfully over the marble they fall for the first time upon a scrap of paper pasted at the bottom of it, a wretched, unsightly, scarce legible rag, such as insult some of the antiques in this gallery, and on it is written:—

Antiope coi figli Anfione e Zeto.

A sudden, perplexed wonder fills our mind—wonder succeeded by amusement. The bunglers, why they must have glued the wrong label on the bas-relief. Of course! and we turn out the number of the piece in the catalogue, the solemn, portly catalogue, full of references to Fea, and Visconti, and Winckelmann. Number—yes, here it is, here it is. What, again?

Antiope urging her sons, Amphion and Zethus, to avenge her by the murder of Dirce.

We put down the catalogue in considerable disgust. What, they don't see that that is Orpheus and Eurydice! They dare, those soulless pedants, to call *that* Antiope with Amphion and Zethus! Ah!—and with smothered indignation we leave the gallery. Passing through the little ilex copse near the villa, the colossal bust of Winckelmann meets our eyes, the heavy, clear-featured, strong-browed head of him who first revealed the world of ancient art. And such profanation goes on, as it were, under his eyes, in that very Villa Albani which he so loved, where he first grew intimate with the antique! What would he have said to such heartless obtuseness?

We have his great work, the work which no amount of additional learning can ever supersede, because no amount of additional learning will ever enable us to feel antique beauty more keenly and profoundly than he did—we have his great work on our shelf, and as soon as we are back at home, our mind still working on Orpheus and Eurydice, we take it down and search for a reference to our bas-relief. We search all through the index in vain; then turn over the pages where it may possibly be

mentioned, again in vain; no Orpheus and Eurydice. Ah! "A bas-relief at the Villa Albani"—let us see what that may be. "A bas-relief," &c., &c.—horror beyond words! The bas-relief—our bas-relief—deliberately set down as Antiope with Amphion and Zethus—set down as Antiope with Amphion and Zethus by Winckelmann himself!

Yes, and he gravely states his reasons for so doing. The situation is evidently one of great hesitation; there is reluctance on the one hand, persuasion on the other. Moreover, the female figure is that of a mourner, of a supplicant, draped and half veiled as it is; the figure with the lyre, in the Thracian or Thessalian costume, must necessarily be Amphion, while the other in the loose tunic of a shepherd, must as evidently be his brother, Zethus; and if we put together these facts, we cannot but conclude that the subject of the bas-relief is, as previously stated, Antiope persuading Amphion and Zethus to avenge her on Dirce.

The argument is a good one, there can be no denying it, although it is very strange that Winckelmann should not have perceived that the bas-relief represented Orpheus and Eurydice. But after all, we ask ourselves, as the confusion in our minds gradually clears up: how do we know that this *is* Orpheus and Eurydice and not Antiope and her sons? How? and the answer rises up indignantly, Because we see to the contrary; because we know that it must be Orpheus and Eurydice; because we feel morally persuaded that it is. But a doubt creeps up. We are morally convinced, but whence this conviction? Did we come to the bas-relief not knowing what it was, and did we then cry out, overcome by its internal evidence, that it must represent Orpheus and Eurydice? Did we ourselves examine and weigh the evidence as Winckelmann did? And we confess to ourselves that we did none of these things. But how, then, explain this intense conviction, and the emotion awakened in us by the bas-relief? Yet that emotion was genuine; and now we have little by little to own that we had read in a book by M. Charles Blanc that such and such a bas-relief at the Villa Albani represented Orpheus and Eurydice, and that we had accepted the assertion blindly, unscrutinisingly, and coming to the bas-relief with that idea, did not dream of examining into its truth. And did we not then let our mind wander off from the bas-relief to the story of Orpheus, and make a sort of variation on Virgil's poem, and mistake all this for the impression received from the bas-relief itself? May this not be the explanation of our intense conviction? It seems as if it were so. We have not only lost our sentimental pleasure in the bas-relief, but we have been caught by ourselves (most humiliating of all such positions) weaving fantastic stories out of nothing at all, decrying great critics for want of discernment when we ourselves had shown none whatever.

It may have been childish, but it was natural to feel considerable bitterness at this discovery; you may smile, but we had lost something precious, the idea that art was beginning to say more to us than to others, the budding satisfaction of being no longer a stranger to the

antique, and this loss was truly bitter; nay, in the first bitterness of the discovery, we had almost taken an aversion to the bas-relief, as people will take an aversion to the things about which they know themselves to have been foolish. However, as this feeling subsided, we began to reflect that the really worthy and dignified course would be to attain to real certainty on the subject, and finding that our recollection of the bas-relief was not so perfectly distinct as to authorise a final decision, we determined coolly to examine the work once more, and to draw our conclusions on the spot.

The following Tuesday, therefore, we started betimes for the Villa Albani, intending to have a good hour to ourselves before the arrival of the usual gaping visitors. The gallery was quite empty; we drew one of the heavy chairs robed in printed leather before the bas-relief, and settled ourselves deliberately to examine it. We were now strangely unbiassed on the subject, for the reaction against our first positive mood, and the frequent turning over one view, then the other, had left in us only a very strong critical curiosity, the desire to unravel the tangled reason of our previous unexplained conviction. Of course we found that our memory had failed in one or two particulars, that the image preserved in our mind was not absolutely faithful, but we could discover nothing capable of materially influencing our views. We looked at the bas-relief again and again; strictly speaking, there is in it nothing beyond a woman standing between two men, of whom the one touches her veil, and the other, to whom she turns her back, grasps her right hand, while her left hand rests lightly on the shoulder of the first male figure; so far there is reason for saying that the bas-relief represents either Orpheus and Eurydice, or Antiope and her sons; indeed, all that could fairly be said is that it represents a woman between two men, with one of whom she appears to be in more or less tender converse, whereas she is paying no attention to the other, who is taking her passively drooping hand. There is, however, the additional circumstance that one of the men holds a lyre and is dressed in loose trowsers and mitre-like head-dress, while the other man wears only a short tunic, leaving the arms and legs bare, and that his head is uncovered and shows closely-cut curly locks; the woman being entirely draped, and her head partially covered with a veil. Now, we know that this costume of trowsers and mitre-shaped head-gear was that of certain semi-barbarous peoples connected with the Greeks, amongst others the Thracians and Phrygians, while the simple tunic and the close-cut locks were distinctive of Hellenic youths, especially those admitted to gymnastic training. Moreover, we happen to know that Orpheus was a Thracian, and that Hermes, on the other hand, although in one capacity conductor of the souls to Hades, was also the patron divinity of the Greek *ephebi*, of the youths engaged in gymnastic exercises. Now if we put together these several facts, we perceive great likelihood of these two figures—the one in the dress of a barbarian, which Orpheus is known

to have been, and holding a lyre, which Orpheus is known to have played, and the other in the dress of a Greek *ephebus*, which Hermes is known to have worn—of these two figures really being intended for Orpheus and Hermes. At the same time, we must recollect that Amphion also is known to have worn this barbaric costume and to have played the lyre, while his brother, Zethus, is equally known to have worn the habit of the *ephebus;* so that Winckelmann has quite as good grounds for his assertion as we have for ours. If only the sculptor had taken the trouble to give the figure in the tunic a pair of winged sandals or a caduceus, or a winged cap; then there could remain no doubt of his being Hermes, for it is a positive fact that no one except Hermes ever had these attributes; the doubt is owing to the choice of insufficiently definite and distinctive peculiarities. But, it now strikes us, all this is founded upon the supposition that we know that the barbarians wore trowsers and mitres, that Orpheus was a sort of barbarian, that Greek *ephebi* wore tunics and short-cut hair, that Hermes was a sort of *ephebus*, that moreover he was a conductor of souls; now, supposing we knew none or only some of these facts, which we certainly should not, if Classical dictionaries had not taught them us, how could we argue that this is Orpheus and that Hermes? Is the meaning of a work of art to depend on Lempriere and Dr. William Smith? At that rate the sculptor might as well have let alone all such distinctions, and merely written under one figure *Orpheus* or *Amphion*, whichever it might be, under the other *Hermes* or *Zethus;* this would not have pre-supposed more knowledge on our part, since it seems even easier to learn the Greek alphabet than the precise attributes of various antique gods and demigods, and then, too, no mistake would have been possible, we should have had no choice, the figure *must* be either Orpheus or Amphion, Hermes or Zethus, since the artist himself said so. But this would be an admission of the incapacity of the art or the artist, like the old device of writing—"This is a lion," "This is a horse;" well but, after all, how are we able to recognise a painted lion or a horse? is it not, thanks to previous knowledge, to our acquaintance with a live horse or live lion? if we had never seen either, could we say, "This is a lion," "That is a horse?" evidently not. But then most people can recognise a horse or a lion, while they cannot be expected to recognise a person they have never seen, especially a purely imaginary one; the case is evidently one of degree; if we had never seen a cow, and did not know that cows are milked, we should no more understand the meaning of a representation of cow-milking than we should understand the meaning of a picture of Achilles in Scyros if we knew nothing about Achilles. The comprehension of the subject of a work of art would therefore seem to require certain previous information; the work of art would seem to be unable to tell its story itself, unless we have the key to that story. Now this is not the case with literature; given the comprehension of the separate words, no further information is required to understand the meaning, the subject of prose,

or verse; Virgil's lines presuppose no knowledge of the story of Orpheus, they themselves give the knowledge of it. The difference, then, between the poem and the bas-relief is that the story is absolutely contained in the former, and not absolutely contained in the latter; the story of Orpheus is part of the organic whole, of the existence of the poem; the two are inseparable, since the one is formed out of the other; whereas the story of Orpheus is separate from the organic existence of the bas-relief, it is arbitrarily connected with it, and they need not co-exist. What then is the bas-relief? A meaningless thing, to which we have wilfully attached a meaning which is not part or parcel of it—a blank sheet of paper on which we write what comes into our head, and which itself can tell us nothing.

As we look up perplexedly at the bas-relief, which, after having been as confused, has now become well nigh as blank as our mind, we are startled by hearing our name from a well-known voice behind us. A young painter stands by our side, a creature knowing or thinking of very little beyond his pencils and brushes, serenely unconscious of literature and science in his complete devotion to art. A few trivial sentences are exchanged, during which we catch our friend's eye glancing at the bas-relief. "I never noticed that before," he remarks. "Do you know I like it better than anything else in this room? Strange that I should not have noticed it before."

"It is a very interesting work," we answer; adding, with purposely feigned decision, "Of course you see that it represents Orpheus and Eurydice, not Antiope and her sons."

The painter, whose instinctive impression on the point we have thus tried to elicit, seems wholly unmoved by this remark; the fact literally passes across his mind without in the least touching it.

"Does it? Ah, what a splendid mass of drapery! That grand, round fold and those small, fine vertical ones. I should like to make a sketch of that."

A sort of veil seems suddenly to fall off our mental eyes; these simple, earnest words, this intense admiration seem to have shed new light into our mind.

This fellow, who knows or cares apparently nothing whatever about either Orpheus or Antiope, has not found the bas-relief a blank; it has spoken for him, the clear, unmistakeable language of lines and curves, of light and shade, a language needing no interpreters, no dictionaries, and it has told him the fact, the fact depending on no previous knowledge, irrefutable and eternal, that it is beautiful. And as our eyes follow his, and we listen to his simple, unaffected, unpoetical exclamations of admiration at this combination of lines, or that bend of a limb, we recognise that if poetry has its unchangeable effects, its power which, in order to be felt, requires only the comprehension of words, art also has its unchangeable effects, its power, its supreme virtue, which all can feel who have eyes and minds that can see. The bas-relief does not necessarily tell us the story of Orpheus and Eurydice, as Virgil's lines do, that is

not inherent in its nature as in theirs; but it tells us the fact of its beauty, and that fact is vital, eternal, and indissolubly connected with it.

To appreciate a work of art means, therefore, to appreciate that work of art itself, as distinguished from appreciating something outside it, something accidentally or arbitrarily connected with it; to appreciate Virgil's lines means to appreciate his telling of the story of Orpheus, his choice of words and his metre; to appreciate the bas-relief means to appreciate the combination of forms and lights and shades; and a person who cared for Virgil's lines because they suggested the bas-relief, or for the bas-relief because it suggested Virgil's lines, would equally be appreciating neither, since his pleasure depended on something separate from the work of art itself.

Yet this is what constantly happens, and happens on account of two very simple and legitimate movements of the mind: that of comparison and that of association. Let us examine what we have called, for want of a more definite word, the movement of comparison. You are enjoying a work of art, plastic or musical; what you enjoy is the work of art itself, the combination of lines, lights and shades and colours in the one case, the combination of modulations and harmonies in the other; now, as this enjoyment means merely the pleasing activity of your visual and æsthetic, or acoustic and æsthetic organism, you instinctively wish to increase the activity in order to increase the pleasure; the increase of activity is obtained by approximating as much as possible to the creative activity of the original artist, by going over every step that he has gone over, by creating the work of art over again in the intensity of appreciation. If it be a plastic work, you naturally produce your pencil and brushes and copy it; if it be a musical composition, you naturally try and reproduce it by means of your voice or your instrument; and you thus obtain the highest degree of æsthetical activity and pleasure compatible with mere appreciation. But supposing you can neither draw, nor sing, nor play; supposing you have only another set of faculties, those dealing with thoughts and images, those of the artist in words, of the writer. How will you obtain that high degree of æsthetical activity, how will you go over the steps of the original creator? You will find that words cannot copy the work of art, plastic or musical; that lines and lights and shades, or modulations and harmonies, must be seen or heard to be appreciated; that, in short, you have no means of absolutely reproducing what you have seen or heard;—instinctively, unintentionally, unconsciously, you will seek for an equivalent for it; you will try and produce with the means at your disposal something analogous to the work of art, you will obtain your æsthetic activity in another set of faculties; not being able to draw or to sing, you will think and feel, and, in default of producing a copy, you will produce an equivalent. But the same result is not attainable by different means; a painter, copying a statue, will produce not a statue but a picture; a sculptor copying a picture will produce a model, not a sketch; yet the difference between the *modus*

operandi of painting and sculpture is nothing compared with that between the *modus operandi* of art which appeals to the eye or the ear, and art which appeals direct to the mind; of art which deals with visible or audible shapes, and of art which deals with purely abstract thoughts and images. How much greater, then, must not also be the difference in the result! instead of a statue you have, not a picture, but a poem, a work of art of totally different nature from the one which you originally tried to reproduce. Instead of visual or audible forms, you have feelings and fancies; and if you compare your equivalent with the original work of art you will probably find that it has little in common with it; you had seen a beautifully chiselled head, and you say that you have perceived a beautiful emotion'; you had heard a lovely modulation, and you have written that you witnessed a pathetic parting; instead of your eye and your ear, your imagination and feeling have been active, and the product of their activity is a special, separate one. So, in your desire to appreciate a work of art, you have, after a fashion, created a new one, good or bad, and having created it, there are a hundred chances against one that you will henceforward perceive your creation and not the original work; that you will no longer perceive lines or sounds, but fancies and feelings, in short, that instead of appreciating the work of art itself, you will appreciate merely your intellectual equivalent of it, that is to say, something which most distinctly and emphatically is *not* the work of art.

The process of association is even commoner: you have taken interest in some story, or some form, your mind has worked upon it; you are shown a work of art whose name, often nothing more, connects it with this story or poem, and your thoughts being full of the latter, you apply to the work of art the remarks you had made about the story or poem; you see in the work of art the details of that story or poem; you look at it as a mere illustration; very often, you do not look at it at all; for although your bodily eyes may be fixed on the picture or statue, your intellectual eyes are busy with some recollection or impression in your mind; it is the case of the bas-relief of the Villa Albani, of the pleasure received from Virgil's lines being reawakened by the mere circumstance of the bas-relief being called, rightly or wrongly, Orpheus and Eurydice; it is the story of a hundred interpretations of works of art, of people seeing a comic expression in a certain group at the Villa Ludovisi because they imagined it to represent Papirius and his mother, while other people found the same group highly tragic, because they fancied it represented Electra and Orestes; it is the old story of violent emotion, attributed to wholly unemotional music, because the words to which it is arbitrarily connected happen to be pathetic; the endless story of delusions of all sorts, of associations of feelings and ideas as accidental as those which make certain tunes or sights depress us because we happened to be in a melancholy mood when we first saw or heard them.

What becomes of the real, inherent effect of the work of art itself in the midst of such concatenations of fancies and associations? How can

we listen to its own magic speech, its language of lines and colours and sounds, when our mind is full of confused voices telling us of different and irrelevant things? Where, at such times, is our artistic appreciation, and what is it worth? Should we then, if such a thing were possible, forbid such comparisons, such associations? Should we voluntarily deprive ourselves of such pleasure as is not given by the work of art itself?

No, but we should restrain such impressions, we should, as far as we can, remain conscious of the fact that they are mere effects of comparison and association, that they are not the work of art, but something distinct from it, and that the work of art itself exists in the lines, tints, lights and shades of the picture or statue, in the modulations and harmonies of a composition, and that all the rest is gratuitously added by ourselves. Nay, we should remember that there could not even have been that very comparison, that very association if there had been no previous real artistic perception; that unless we had first cared for Virgil's Orpheus for its own sake, we could not afterwards have cared for the bas-relief on its account.

We confess that we have ourselves become instinctively jealous of such foreign causes of pleasure in art, jealous because we have been pained by their constant encroachment; the feeling may be an exaggerated one, but it is a natural reaction. We have thus caught ourselves almost regretting that pictures should have any subjects; we have sometimes felt that the adaptation of music to the drama is a sort of profanation; and all this because we have too often observed that the subject seemed to engross so much attention as to make people forget the picture, and that the drama made people misinterpret the music, and that criticism itself, instead of checking this tendency, has done much to further it. Yes, critics, grave and emphatic thinkers, have spoken as if the chief merit of the painter had consisted in clearly expressing some story, which in all probability was not worth expressing, some dull monkish legend which his genius alone could render tolerable; as if the chief aim of the composer were to follow the mazes of some wretched imbecile libretto, which has become endurable thanks only to his notes; as if the immortal were to be chained to the mortal, and mediocrity, inferiority, mere trumpery fact or trumpery utility were to bridle and bestride the divine hippogriff of art, and, like another Astolfo, fly up on its back into the regions of immortality. Artists themselves have been of this way of thinking, we cannot say of feeling, for, as long as they were true artists, their instinctive feelings must have propelled them in a very different direction. Gluck, that great dramatist, who was greatest when least dramatic, thought that music was made for the sake of the drama, that its greatest glory was to express the difference, as he himself wrote, between a princess and a waiting-maid, between a Spartan and a Phrygian, to follow the steps of a play as its humble retainer and commentator. Gluck composed his music for the sake of the dramas; but, O irony of art! the dramas are recollected only for the sake of his music.

Let the artist be humble, mistrustful of his own art, let him believe it to be subservient to something outside it, devote it magnanimously to some purpose of utility, or some expression of fact, sacrifice it throughout; it will be all in vain; if his work be excellent, it will subordinate all to itself, it will swallow up every other interest, throw into the shade every other utility.

One day, the Pope's banker, Agostino Chigi, came to Master Rafael of Urbino, and said to him—"I am building a little pleasure villa in which to entertain my friends. Baldassare Peruzzi has made the plans, Sebastiano del Piombo has designed the arabesques, Nanni da Udine will paint me the garlands of fruit and flowers; it must be perfection. You shall paint me the walls of the open hall looking out on the Tiber, that it may be a fit place wherein to sup and make merry with popes and cardinals and princes." "Very good," answered Rafael.

The object was to obtain a dining-hall, and the fresco was to be there merely as an ornament; but Rafael painted his Galatea, and behold, the hall could no longer be used as a dining-room; everyone crowded into it to see the fresco; the hall has now become a gallery, and the real property, less of its owners, who cannot make use of it, than of the whole world, who insists on entering it; the room now exists only for the sake of the fresco, yet the fresco was originally intended to exist only for it. This is the inevitable course of art; we call in beauty as a servant, and see, like some strange dæmon, it becomes the master; it may answer our call, but we have to do its bidding.

We have strayed far away from Orpheus and Eurydice, while thus following the train of ideas suggested by the story of the bas-relief. Yet we may return to the subject and use it as an illustration of our last remark. We have said much against the common tendency towards transporting on to a work of art an interest not originally due to it, because, by this means, we are apt to lose the interest which does belong to the work of art. But, if only each could get its due, each exert its power unimpaired, there could be nothing more delightful than thus to enjoy the joint effect of several works of art; not, according to the notion of certain æsthetic visionaries,—who do not see that singers cannot be living Greek statues nor librettists poets, nor scene-painters Poussins,—in one clumsy ambiguous monster spectacle, but in our minds, in our fancy; if, conscious of the difference between them, we could unite in one recollection the works of various arts: people the glades and dingles of Keats with the divinities we have seen in marble, play upon the reed of the Praxitelian faun the woodland melodies of Mozart's Tamino. It would thus be the highest reward for self-scrutinising æsthetic humility, for honest appreciation of each art for itself, for brave sacrifice of our own artistic whimsies and vanities, to enable us to bring up simultaneously the recollection of Virgil's nobly pathetic lines, of the exquisitely simple and supple forms of the bas-relief, of the grand and tender music of Gluck, and to unite them in one noble pageant of the imagination, evoked by the spell of those two names: Orpheus and Eurydice.

Hours in a Library.

No. XVIII.—The First Edinburgh Reviewers.

When browsing at random in a respectable library, one is pretty sure to hit upon the early numbers of the *Edinburgh Review*, and prompted in consequence to ask oneself the question, what are the intrinsic merits of writing which produced so great an effect upon our grandfathers? The *Review*, we may say, has lived into a third generation. The last survivor of the original set has passed away; and there are but few relics even of that second galaxy of authors amongst whom Macaulay was the most brilliant star. One may speak, therefore, without shocking existing susceptibilities, of the *Review* in its first period, when Jeffrey, Sydney Smith, and Brougham were the most prominent names. A man may still call himself middle-aged and yet have a distinct memory of Brougham courting, rather too eagerly, the applause of the Social Science Association; of Jeffrey, as he appeared in his kindly old age, when he could hardly have spoken sharply of a Lake poet; and even of the last outpourings of the irrepressible gaiety of Sydney Smith. But the period of their literary activity is already so distant as to have passed into the domain of history. It is the same thing to say that it already belongs in some degree to the neighbouring or overlapping domain of fiction.

There is, in fact, already a conventional history of the early *Edinburgh Review*, repeated without hesitation in all literary histories and assumed in a thousand allusions, which becomes a little incredible when we take down the dusty old volumes, where dingy calf has replaced the original splendours of the blue and yellow, and which have inevitably lost much of their savour during more than half a century's repose. The story of the original publication has been given by the chief founders. Edinburgh, at the beginning of the century, was one of those provincial centres of intellectual activity which have an increasing difficulty in maintaining themselves against metropolitan attractions. In the last half of the eighteenth century, such philosophical activity as existed in the country seemed to have taken refuge in the northern half of the island. A set of brilliant young men, living in a society still proud of the reputation of Hume, Adam Smith, Reid, Robertson, Dugald Stewart, and other northern luminaries, might naturally be susceptible to the stimulus of literary ambition. In politics the most rampant Conservatism, rendered bitter by the recent experience of the French Revolution, exercised a sway in Scotland more undisputed and vigorous than it is now easy to understand. The younger men who

inclined to Liberalism, were naturally prepared to welcome an organ for the expression of their views. Accordingly a knot of clever lads (Smith was 31, Jeffrey 29, Brown 24, Horner 24, and Brougham 23), met in the third (not, as Smith afterwards said, the "eighth or ninth") story of a house in Edinburgh and started the journal by acclamation. The first number appeared in October 1802, and produced, we are told, an "electrical" effect. Its old humdrum rivals collapsed before it. Its science, its philosophy, its literature were equally admired. Its politics excited the wrath and dread of Tories and the exultant delight of Whigs. It was, says Cockburn, a "pillar of fire," a far-seen beacon suddenly lighted in a dark place. Its able advocacy of political principles was as striking as its judicial air of criticism, unprecedented in periodical literature. To appreciate its influence, we must remember, says Sydney Smith, that in those days a number of reforms, now familiar to us all, were still regarded as startling innovations. The Catholics were not emancipated, nor the game-laws softened, nor the Court of Chancery reformed, nor the slave-trade abolished. Cruel punishment still disgraced the criminal code, libel was put down with vindictive severity, prisoners were not allowed counsel in capital cases, and many other grievances now wholly or partially redressed were still flourishing in full force.

Were they put down solely by the *Edinburgh Review*? That, of course, would not be alleged by its most ardent admirers; though Sydney Smith certainly holds that the attacks of the *Edinburgh* were amongst the most efficient causes of the many victories which followed. I am not concerned to dispute the statement; nor in fact do I doubt that it contains much truth. But if we look at the *Review* simply as literary critics and examine its volumes expecting to be edified by such critical vigour and such a plentiful outpouring of righteous indignation in burning language as might correspond to this picture of a great organ of liberal opinion, we shall, I fear, be cruelly disappointed. Let us speak the plain truth at once. Every one who turns from the periodical literature of the present day to the original *Edinburgh Review*, will be amazed at its inferiority. It is generally dull and, when not dull, flimsy. The vigour has departed; the fire is extinct. To some extent, of course, this is inevitable. Even the magnificent eloquence of Burke has lost some of its early gloss. We can read, comparatively unmoved, passages that would have once carried us off our legs in the exuberant torrent of passionate invective. But, making all possible allowance for the fading of all things human, I think that every reader who is frank will admit his disappointment. Here and there, of course, are amusing passages; Sydney Smith's humour or some of Jeffrey's slashing and swaggering retains a few sparks of fire. The pertness and petulance of the youthful critics is amusing, though hardly in the way intended by themselves. But, as a rule, one may most easily characterize the contents by saying that few of the articles would have a chance of acceptance by the editor of a first-rate periodical to-day; and that the majority belong to an inferior variety of what is now called

"padding"—mere perfunctory bits of work, obviously manufactured by the critic out of the book before him.

The great political importance of the *Edinburgh Review* belongs to a later period. When the Whigs began to revive after the long reign of Tory principles, and such questions as Roman Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform were seriously coming to the front, the *Review* grew to be a most effective organ of the rising party. Even in earlier years, it was doubtless a matter of real moment that the ablest periodical of the day should manifest sympathies with the cause then so profoundly depressed. But in those years there is nothing of that vehement and unsparing advocacy of Whig principles which we might expect from a band of youthful enthusiasts. So far indeed was the *Review* from unhesitating partisanship that the sound Tory Scott contributed to its pages for some years; and so late as the end of 1807 invited Southey, a still more unsparing Tory, as became a "renegade" or a "convert," to enlist under Jeffrey. Southey, it is true, was prevented from joining by scruples shared by his correspondent, but it was not for another year that the breach became irreparable. The final offence was given by the "famous article upon Cevallos," which appeared in October 1808. Even at that period Scott understood some remarks of Jeffrey's as an offer to suppress the partisan tendencies of his *Review*. Jeffrey repudiated this interpretation; but the statement is enough to show that, for six years after its birth, the *Review* had not been conducted in such a way as to pledge itself beyond all redemption in the eyes of staunch Tories.*

The Cevallos article, the work in uncertain proportions of Brougham and Jeffrey, was undoubtedly calculated to give offence. It contained an eloquent expression of foreboding as to the chances of the war in Spain. The Whigs, whose policy had been opposed to the war, naturally prophesied its ill success, and, until this period, facts had certainly not confuted their auguries. It was equally natural that their opponents should be scandalised by their apparent want of patriotism. Scott's

* Scott's letter, stating that this overture had been made by Jeffrey under terror of the *Quarterly* was first published in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*. Jeffrey denied that he could ever have made the offer, both because his contributors were too independent and because he had always considered politics to be (as he remembered to have told Scott) the "right leg" of the *Review*. Undoubtedly, though Scott's letter was written at the time and Jeffrey's contradiction many years afterwards, it seems that Scott must have exaggerated. And yet in Horner's *Memoirs*, we find a letter from Jeffrey which goes far to show that there was more than might be supposed to confirm Scott's statement. Jeffrey begs for Horner's assistance in the "day of need," caused by the Cevallos article and the threatened *Quarterly*. He tells Horner that he may write upon any subject he pleases—"only no party politics, and nothing but exemplary moderation and impartiality on all politics. I have allowed too much mischief to be done from my mere indifference and love of sport; but it would be inexcusable to spoil the powerful instrument we have got hold of for the sake of teazing and playing tricks."—Horner's *Memoirs*. i. 439. It was on the occasion of the Cevallos article that the Earl of Buchan solemnly kicked the *Review* from his study into the street—a performance which he supposed would be fatal to its circulation.

indignation was characteristic. The *Edinburgh Review*, he says, "tells you coolly, 'We foresee a revolution in this country as well as Mr. Cobbett;' and, to say the truth, by degrading the person of the sovereign, exalting the power of the French armies and the wisdom of their counsels, holding forth that peace (which they allow can only be purchased by the humiliating prostration of our honour) is indispensable to the very existence of this country, I think that for these two years past, they have done their utmost to hasten the fulfilment of their own prophecy." Yet, he adds, 9,000 copies are printed quarterly, "no genteel family *can* pretend to be without it," and it contains the only valuable literary criticism of the day. The antidote was to be supplied by the foundation of the *Quarterly*. The Cevallos article, as Brougham says,* "first made the Reviewers conspicuous as Liberals."

Jeffrey and his friends were in fact in the very difficult position of all middle parties during a period of intense national and patriotic excitement. If they attacked Perceval or Canning or Castlereagh in one direction, they were equally opposed to the rough and ready democracy of Cobbett or Burdett, and to the more philosophical radicalism of men like Godwin or Bentham. They were generally too young to have been infected by the original Whig sympathy for the French Revolution, or embittered by the reaction. They condemned the principles of '89 as decidedly if not as heartily as the Tories. The difference, as Sydney Smith said to his imaginary Tory Abraham Plymley, is "in the means, not in the end. We both love the Constitution, respect the King, and abhor the French." Only, as the difference about the means was diametrical, Tories naturally held them to be playing into the hands of destructives, though more out of cowardice than malignity. In such a position it is not surprising if the reviewers generally spoke in apologetic terms and with bated breath. They could protest against the dominant policy as rash and bigoted, but could not put forwards conflicting principles without guarding themselves against the imputation of favouring the common enemy. The Puritans of Radicalism set down this vacillation to a total want of fixed principle, if not to baser motives. The first volume of the *Westminster Review* (1824) contains a characteristic assault upon the "see-saw" system of the *Edinburgh* by the two Mills. The *Edinburgh* is sternly condemned for its truckling to the aristocracy, its cowardice, political immorality, and (of all things!) its sentimentalism. In after years J. S. Mill contributed to its pages himself; but the opinion of his fervid youth was that of the whole Bentham school.† It is plain, however, that the *Review*, even when it had succeeded, did not absorb the activities of its contributors so exclusively as is sometimes suggested. They rapidly dispersed to enter upon different careers.

* See the privately printed correspondence of Mr. Macvey Napier, a remarkably interesting book, to which I venture to refer, as it has already formed the subject of some public notices.

† See Mill's *Autobiography*, p. 92, for an interesting account of these articles.

Even before the first number appeared, Jeffrey complains that almost all his friends are about to emigrate to London; and the prediction was soon verified. Sydney Smith left to begin his career as a clergyman in London; Horner and Brougham almost immediately took to the English Bar, with a view to pushing into public life; Allen joined Lord Holland; Charles Bell set up in a London practice; two other promising contributors took offence, and deserted the *Review* in its infancy; and Jeffrey was left almost alone, though still a centre of attraction to the scattered group. He himself only undertook the editorship, on the understanding that he might renounce it as soon as he could do without it; and always guarded himself most carefully against any appearance of deserting a legal for a literary career. Although the Edinburgh *cénacle* was not dissolved, its bonds were greatly loosened; the chief contributors were in no sense men who looked upon literature as a principal occupation; and Jeffrey, as much as Brougham and Horner, would have resented, as a mischievous imputation, the suggestion that his chief energies were devoted to the *Review*. In some sense this might be an advantage. An article upon politics or philosophy is, of course, better done by a professed statesman and thinker than by a literary hack; but, on the other hand, a man who turns aside from politics or philosophy to do mere hackwork, does it worse than the professed man of letters. Work, taken up at odd hours to satisfy editorial importunity or add a few pounds to a narrow income, is apt to show the characteristic defects of all amateur performances. A very large part of the early numbers is amateurish in this objectionable sense. It is mere hand-to-mouth information, and is written, so to speak, with the left hand. A clever man has turned over the last new book of travels or poetry, or made a sudden incursion into foreign literature or into some passage of history entirely fresh to him, and has given his first impressions with an audacity which almost disarms one by its extraordinary *naïveté*. The standard of such disquisitions was then so low that writing which would now be impossible passed muster without an objection. When, in later years, Macaulay discussed Hampden or Chatham, the book which he ostensibly reviewed was a mere pretext for producing the rich stores of a mind trained by years of previous historical study. Jeffrey wrote about Mrs. Hutchinson's *Memoirs* and Pepys' *Diary* as though the books had for the first time revealed to him the existence of Puritans or of courtiers under the Restoration. The author of an article upon German metaphysics at the present day would think it necessary to show that if he had not the portentous learning which Sir William Hamilton embodied in his *Edinburgh* articles, he had at least read the book under review, and knew something of the language. The author of a contemptuous review of Kant, in an early number of the *Edinburgh*, makes it even ostentatiously evident that he has never read a line of the original, and that his whole knowledge is derived from what (by his own account) is a very rambling and inadequate French essay. The young gentlemen who

wrote in those days have a jaunty mode of pronouncing upon all conceivable topics without even affecting to have studied the subject, which is amusing in its way, and which fully explains the flimsy nature of their performance.

The authors, in fact, regarded these essays, at the time, as purely ephemeral. The success of the *Review* suggested republication long afterwards. The first collection of articles was, I presume, Sydney Smith's, in 1839; Jeffrey's and Macaulay's followed in 1843; and at that time even Macaulay thought it necessary to explain that the republication was forced upon him by the Americans. The plan of passing even the most serious books through the pages of a periodical has become so common that such modesty would now imply the emptiest affectation. The collections of Jeffrey and Sydney Smith will give a sufficient impression of the earlier numbers of the *Review*. The only contributors of equal reputation were Horner and Brougham. Horner, so far as one can judge, was a typical representative of those solid, indomitable Scotchmen whom one knows not whether to respect for their energy or to dread as the most intolerable of bores. He plodded through legal, metaphysical, scientific, and literary studies like an elephant forcing his way through a jungle; and laboured as resolutely and systematically to acquire graces of style as to master the intricacies of the "dismal science." At an early age, and with no advantages of position, he had gained extraordinary authority in Parliament. Sydney Smith said of him that he had the Ten Commandments written on his face, and looked so virtuous that he might commit any crime with impunity. His death probably deprived us of a most exemplary statesman and first-rate Chancellor of the Exchequer, but it can hardly have been a great loss to literature.* His contributions gave some solid economical speculation to the *Review*, but were neither numerous nor lively. Brougham's amazing vitality wasted itself in a different way. His multifarious energy, from early boyhood to the borders of old age, would be almost incredible, if we had not the good fortune to be contemporaries of Mr. Gladstone. His share in the opening numbers

* Passages from Horner's journals, given in his *Memoirs*, are quaint illustrations of the frame of mind generally inculcated in manuals for the use of virtuous young men. At the age of twenty-eight, he resolves one day to meditate upon various topics, distributed under nine heads, including the society to be formed in the metropolis; the characters to be studied; the scale of intimacies; the style of conversation; the use of other men's minds in self-education; the regulation of ambition, of political sentiments, connections and conduct; the importance of "steadily systematising all plans and aims of life, and so providing against contingencies as to put happiness at least out of the reach of accident," and the cultivation of moral feelings by "dignified sentiments and pleasing associations" derived from poets, moralists, or actual life. Sydney Smith, in a very lively portrait, says that Horner was the best, kindest, simplest, and most incorruptible of mankind; but intimates sufficiently that his impenetrability to the facetious was something almost unexampled. A jest upon an important subject was, it seems, the only affliction which his strength of principle would not enable him to bear with patience.

of the *Review* is another of the points upon which there is an odd conflict of testimony.* But from a very early period he was the most voluminous and, at times, the most valuable of contributors. It has been said that he once wrote a whole number, including articles upon lithotomy and Chinese music. It is more authentic that he contributed six articles to one number, at the very crisis of his political career, and at the same period he boasts of having written a fifth of the whole *Review* to that time. He would sit down in a morning and write off twenty pages at a single effort. Jeffrey compares his own editorial authority to that of a feudal monarch over some independent barons. When Jeffrey gave up the *Review*, this "baron" aspired to something more like domination than independence. He made the unfortunate editor's life a burden to him. He wrote voluminous letters, objurgating, entreating, boasting of past services, denouncing rival contributors, declaring that a regard for the views of any other man was base subservience to a renegade Ministry, or foolish attention to the hints of understrappers, threatening, if he was neglected, to set up a rival review, and generally hectoring, bullying, and declaiming in a manner which gives one the highest opinion of the diplomatic skill of the editor, who managed, without truckling, to avoid a breach with his tremendous contributor. Brougham indeed was not quite blind to the fact that the *Review* was as useful to him as he ould be to the *Review*, and was therefore more amenable than might have been expected, in the last resort. But he was in every relation one of those men who are nearly as much hated and dreaded by their colleagues as by the adversary—a kind of irrepressible rocket, only too easy to discharge, but whose course defied prediction.

It is, however, admitted by every one that the literary results of this portentous activity were essentially ephemeral. His writings are hopelessly commonplace in substance, and slipshod in style. His garden offers a bushel of potatoes instead of a single peach. Much of Brougham's work was up to the level necessary to give effect to the manifesto of an active politician. It was a fair exposition of the arguments common at the time; but it has nowhere that stamp of originality in thought or brilliance in expression which could confer upon it a permanent vitality.

Jeffrey and Sydney Smith deserve more respectful treatment. Macaulay speaks of his first edition with respectful enthusiasm. He says of the collected contributions that the "variety and fertility of Jeffrey's mind" seem more extraordinary than ever. Scarcely could any three

* It would appear, from one of Jeffrey's statements, that Brougham selfishly hung back till after the third number of the *Review*, and its "assured success" (Horner's *Memoirs*, i. p. 186, and Macvey Napier's *Correspondence*, p. 422); from another, that Brougham, though anxious to contribute, was excluded by Sydney Smith, from prudential motives. On the other hand, Brougham in his autobiography claims (by name) seven articles in the first number, five in the second, eight in the third, and five in the fourth; in five of which he had a collaborator. His hesitation, he says, ended before the appearance of the first number, and was due to doubts as to Jeffrey's being allowed sufficient power.

men have produced such "diversified excellence." "When I compare him with Sydney and myself, I feel, with humility perfectly sincere, that his range is immeasurably wider than ours. And this is only as a writer. But he is not only a writer, he has been a great advocate, and he is a great judge. Take him all in all, I think him more nearly an immortal genius than any man of our time; certainly far more nearly than Brougham, much as Brougham affects the character." Macaulay hated Brougham, and was, perhaps, a little unjust to him. But what are we to say of the writings upon which this panegyric is pronounced?

Jeffrey's collected articles include about eighty out of two hundred reviews, nearly all contributed to the *Edinburgh* within its first period of twenty-five years. They fill four volumes, and are distributed under the seven heads—general literature, history, poetry, metaphysics, fiction, politics, and miscellaneous. Certainly there is versatility enough implied in such a list, and we may be sure that he has ample opportunity for displaying whatever may be in him. It is, however, easy to dismiss some of these divisions. Jeffrey knew history as an English gentleman of average cultivation knew it; that is to say, not enough to justify him in writing about it. He knew as much of metaphysics as a clever lad was likely to pick up at Edinburgh during the reign of Dugald Stewart; his essays in that kind, though they show some aptitude and abundant confidence, do not now deserve serious attention. His chief speculative performance was an essay upon beauty contributed to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, of which his biographer says quaintly that it is "as sound as the subject admits of." It is crude and meagre in substance. The principal conclusion is the rather unsatisfactory one for a professional critic that there are no particular rules about beauty, and consequently that one taste is about as good as another. Nobody, however, could be less inclined to apply this over liberal theory to questions of literary taste. There, he evidently holds, there is most decidedly a right and wrong, and everybody is very plainly in the wrong who differs from himself.

Jeffrey's chief fame—or, should we say, notoriety?—was gained, and his merit should be tested by his success, in this department. The greatest triumph that a literary critic can win is the early recognition of genius not yet appreciated by his contemporaries. The next test of his merit is his capacity for pronouncing sound judgment upon controversies which are fully before the public; and, finally, no inconsiderable merit must be allowed to any critic who has a vigorous taste of his own—not hopelessly eccentric or silly—and expresses it with true literary force. If not a judge, he may in that case be a useful advocate.

What can we say for Jeffrey upon this understanding? Did he ever encourage a rising genius? The sole approach to such a success is an appreciative notice of Keats, which would be the more satisfactory if poor Keats had not been previously assailed by the opposition journal. The other judgments are for the most part pronounced upon men already celebrated; and the single phrase which has survived is the celebrated

"This will never do," directed against Wordsworth's *Excursion*. Every critic is liable to blunder; but Jeffrey's blundering is amazingly systematic and comprehensive. In the last of his poetical critiques (October 1829) he sums up his critical experience. He doubts whether Mrs. Hemans, whom he is reviewing at the time, will be immortal. "The tuneful quartos of Southey," he says, "are already little better than lumber; and the rich melodies of Keats and Shelley, and the fantastical emphasis of Wordsworth, and the plebeian pathos of Crabbe, are melting fast from the field of vision. The novels of Scott have put out his poetry. Even the splendid strains of Moore are fading into distance and dimness, except where they have been married to immortal music; and the blazing star of Byron himself is receding from its place of pride." Who survive this general decay? Not Coleridge, who is not even mentioned; nor is Mrs. Hemans secure. The two who show least marks of decay are—of all people in the world—Rogers and Campbell! It is only to be added that this summary was republished in 1843, by which time the true proportions of the great reputations of the period were becoming more obvious to an ordinary observer. It seems almost incredible now that any sane critic should pick out Rogers and Campbell as the sole enduring relics from the age of Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Coleridge, and Byron.

Doubtless a critic should rather draw the moral of his own fallibility than of his superiority to Jeffrey. Criticism is a still more perishing commodity than poetry. Jeffrey was a man of unusual intelligence and quickness of feeling; and a follower in his steps should think twice before he ventures to cast the first stone. If all critics who have grossly blundered are therefore to be pronounced utterly incompetent, we should, I fear, have to condemn nearly every one who has taken up the profession. Not only Dennis and Rymer, but Dryden, Pope, Addison, Johnson, Gray, Wordsworth, Byron, and even Coleridge, down to the last new critic in the latest and most fashionable journals, would have to be censured. Still there are blunders and blunders; and some of Jeffrey's sins in that kind are such as it is not very easy to forgive. If he attacked great men, it has been said in his defence, he attacked those parts of their writings which were really objectionable. And, of course, nobody will deny that (for example) Wordsworth's wilful and ostentatious inversion of accepted rules presented a very tempting mark to the critic. But—to say nothing of Jeffrey's failure to discharge adequately the correlative duty of generous praise—it must be admitted that his ridicule seems to strike pretty much at random. He picks out Southey, certainly the least eminent of the so-called school of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Lamb, as the one writer of the set whose poetry deserves serious consideration; and, besides attacking Wordsworth's faults, his occasional flatness and childishness, selects some of his finest poems (*e.g.* the Ode on the Intimations of Immortality) as flagrant specimens of the hopelessly absurd.

The *White Doe of Rylstone* may not be Wordsworth's best work; but a man who begins a review of it by proclaiming it to be "the very worst poem ever imprinted in a quarto volume," who follows up this remark by unmixed and indiscriminating abuse, and who publishes the review twenty-eight years later as expressing his mature convictions, is certainly proclaiming his own gross incompetence. Or, again, Jeffrey writes about *Wilhelm Meister* (in 1824), knowing its high reputation in Germany, and finds in it nothing but a text for a dissertation upon the amazing eccentricity of national taste which can admire "sheer nonsense," and at length proclaims himself tired of extracting "so much trash." There is a kind of indecency, a wanton disregard of the general consensus of opinion in such treatment of a contemporary classic (then just translated by Mr. Carlyle, and so brought within Jeffrey's sphere) which one would hope to be now impossible. It is true that Jeffrey relents a little at the end, admits that Goethe has "great talent," and would like to withdraw some of his censure. Whilst, therefore, he regards it as an instance of that diversity of national taste which makes a writer idolized in one country who would not be tolerated in another, he would hold it out rather as an object of wonder than contempt. Though the greater part "would not be endured, and, indeed, could not have been written in England," there are many passages of which any country might naturally be proud. Truly this is an illustration of Jeffrey's fundamental principle that taste has no laws, and is a matter of accidental caprice.

It may be said that better critics have erred with equal recklessness. De Quincey, who could be an admirable critic where his indolent prejudices were not concerned, is even more dead to the merits of Goethe. Byron's critical remarks are generally worth reading, in spite of his wilful eccentricity; and he spoke of Wordsworth and Southey still more brutally than Jeffrey, and admired Rogers as unreasonably. In such cases we may admit the principle already suggested, that even the most reckless criticism has a kind of value when it implies a genuine (even though a mistaken) taste. So long as a man says sincerely what he thinks, he tells us something worth knowing.

Unluckily this is just where Jeffrey is apt to fail; though he affects to be a dictator, he is really a follower of the fashion. He could put up with Rogers' flattest "correctness," Moore's most intolerable tinsel, and even Southey's most ponderous epic poetry, because admiration was respectable. He could endorse, though rather coldly, the general verdict in Scott's favour, only guarding his dignity by some not too judicious criticism; preferring, for example, the sham romantic business of the *Lay* to the incomparable vigour of the rough moss-troopers

> Who sought the beeves that made their broth,
> In Scotland and in England both—

terribly undignified lines, as Jeffrey thinks. So far, though his judicial

swagger strikes us now as rather absurd, and we feel that he is passing sentence on bigger men than himself, he does fairly enough. But, unluckily, the *Edinburgh* wanted a butt. All lively critical journals, it would seem, resemble the old-fashioned squires who kept a badger ready to be baited whenever a little amusement was desirable. The rising school of Lake poets, with their austere professions and real weaknesses, was just the game to show a little sport; and, accordingly, poor Jeffrey blundered into grievous misapprehensions, and has survived chiefly by his worst errors. The simple fact is, that he accepted whatever seemed to a hasty observer to be the safest opinion, that which was current in the most orthodox critical circles, and expressed it with rather more point than his neighbours. But his criticism implies no serious thought or any deeper sentiment than pleasure at having found a good laughing-stock. The most unmistakeable bit of genuine expression of his own feelings in Jeffrey's writings is, I think, to be found in his letters to Dickens. "Oh! my dear, dear Dickens!" he exclaims, "what a No. 5" (of *Dombey and Son*) "you have now given us. I have so cried and sobbed over it last night and again this morning, and felt my heart purified by those tears, and blessed and loved you for making me shed them; and I never can bless and love you enough. Since that divine Nelly was found dead on her humble couch, beneath the snow and ivy, there has been nothing like the actual dying of that sweet Paul in the summer sunshine of that lofty room." The emotion is a little senile, and most of us think it misplaced; but at least it is genuine. The earlier thunders of the *Edinburgh Review* have lost their terrors, because they are in fact mere echoes of commonplace opinion. They are often clever enough and have all the air of judicial authority, but we feel that they are empty shams, concealing no solid core of strong personal feeling even of the perverse variety. The critic has been asking himself, not "What do I feel?" but "What is the correct remark to make?"

Jeffrey's political writing suggests, I think, in some respects a higher estimate of his merits. He has not, it is true, very strong convictions, but his sentiments are liberal in the better sense of the word, and he has a more philosophical tone than is usual with English publicists. He appreciates the truths, now become commonplace, that the political constitution of the country should be developed so as to give free play for the underlying social forces without breaking abruptly with the old traditions. He combats with dignity the narrow prejudices which led to a policy of rigid repression, and which, in his opinion, could only lead to revolution. But the effect of his principles is not a little marred by a certain timidity both of character and intellect. Hopefulness should be the mark of an ardent reformer, and Jeffrey seems to be always decided by his fears. His favourite topic is the advantage of a strong middle party, for he is terribly afraid of a collision between the two extremes; he can only look forwards to despotism if the Tories triumph, and a sweeping revolution if they are beaten. Meanwhile, for many

years he thinks it most probable that both parties will be swallowed up by the common enemy. Never was there such a determined croaker. In 1808 he suspects that Bonaparte will be in Dublin in about fifteen months, when he, if he survives, will try to go to America. In 1811 he expects Bonaparte to be in Ireland in eighteen months, and asks how England can then be kept, and whether it would be worth keeping? France is certain to conquer the continent, and our interference will only "exasperate and accelerate." Bonaparte's invasion of Russia in 1813 made him still more gloomy. He rejoiced at the French defeat as one delivered from a great terror, but the return of the Emperor dejects him again. All he can say of the war (just before Waterloo) is that he is "mortally afraid of it," and that he hates Bonaparte "because he makes me more afraid than anybody else." In 1819 he anticipates "tragical scenes" and a sanguinary revolution; in 1821 he thinks as ill as ever "of the state and prospects of the country," though with less alarm of speedy mischief; and in 1822 he looks forward to revolutionary wars all over the continent, from which we may possibly escape by reason of our "miserable poverty;" whilst it is probable that our old tyrannies and corruptions will last for some 4,000 or 5,000 years longer.

A stalwart politician, Whig or Tory, is rarely developed out of a Mr. Much-Afraid or a Mr. Despondency; they are too closely related to Mr. Facing-Both-Ways. Jeffrey thinks it generally a duty to conceal his fears and affect a confidence which he does not feel; but perhaps the best piece of writing in his essays is that in which he for once gives full expression to his pessimist sentiment. It occurs in a review of a book in which Madame de Staël maintains the doctrine of human perfectibility. Jeffrey explains his more despondent view in a really eloquent passage. He thinks that the increase of educated intelligence will not diminish the permanent causes of human misery. War will be as common as ever, wealth will be used with at least equal selfishness, luxury and dissipation will increase, enthusiasm diminish, intellectual originality will become rarer, the division of labour will make men's lives pettier and more mechanical, and pauperism grow with the development of manufactures. When republishing his essays Jeffrey expresses his continued adherence to these views, and they are more interesting than most of his work, because they have at least the merits of originality and sincerity. Still, one cannot help observing that if the *Edinburgh Review* was an efficient organ of progress, it was not from any ardent faith in progress entertained by its chief conductor.

It is a relief to turn from Jeffrey to Sydney Smith. The highest epithet applicable to Jeffrey is clever, to which we may prefix some modest intensitive. He is a brilliant, versatile, and at bottom liberal and kindly man of the world; but he never gets fairly beyond the border-line which irrevocably separates lively talent from original power. There are dozens of writers who could turn out work on the same pattern and about equally good. Smith, on the other hand, stamps all his work

with his peculiar characteristics. It is original and unmistakeable; and in a certain department—not, of course, a very high one—he has almost unique merits. I do not think that the *Plymley Letters* can be surpassed by anything in the language as specimens of the terse, effective treatment of a great subject in language suitable for popular readers. Of course they have no pretence to the keen polish of Junius, or the weight of thought of Burke, or the rhetorical splendours of Milton; but their humour, freshness, and spirit are inimitable. The *Drapier Letters*, to which they have often been compared, were more effective at the moment; but no fair critic can deny, I think, that Sydney Smith's performance is now incomparably more interesting than Swift's.

The comparison between the dean and the canon is an obvious one, and has often been made. There is a likeness in the external history of the two clergymen who both sought for preferment through politics, and were both, even by friends, felt to have sinned against professional proprieties, and were put off with scanty rewards in consequence. Both, too, were masters of a vigorous style, and original humourists. But the likeness does not go very deep. Swift had the most powerful intellect and the strongest passion as undeniably as Smith had the sweetest nature. The admirable good humour with which Smith accepted his position and devoted himself to honest work in an obscure country parish is the strongest contrast with Swift's misanthropical seclusion; and nothing can be less like than Smith's admirable domestic history and the mysterious love affairs with Stella and Vanessa. Smith's character reminds us more closely of Fuller, whose peculiar humour is much of the same stamp; and who, falling upon hard times, and therefore tinged by a more melancholy sentiment, yet showed the same unconquerable cheerfulness and intellectual vivacity.

Most of Sydney Smith's *Edinburgh* articles are of a very slight texture, though the reader is rewarded by an occasional turn of characteristic quaintness. The criticism is of the most simple-minded kind; but here and there crops up a comment which is irresistibly comic. Here, for example, is a quaint passage from a review of Waterton's *Wanderings*:—

> How astonishing are the freaks and fancies of nature! To what purpose, we say, is a bird placed in the woods of Cayenne, with a bill a yard long, making a noise like a puppy-dog, and laying eggs in hollow trees? To be sure the toucan might retort, To what purpose were gentlemen in Bond Street created? To what purpose were certain members of parliament created, pestering the House of Commons with their ignorance and folly, and impeding the business of the country? There is no end of such questions. So we will not enter into the metaphysics of the toucan.

Smith's humour is most aptly used to give point to the vigorous logic of a thoroughly healthy nature, contemptuous of all nonsense, full of shrewd common sense, and righteously indignant in the presence of all injustice and outworn abuse. It would be difficult to find anywhere a

more brilliant assault upon the prejudices which defend established grievances than the inimitable "Noodle's Oration," into which Smith has compressed the pith of Bentham's *Book of Fallacies*. There is a certain resemblance between the logic of Smith and Macaulay, both of whom, it must be admitted, are rather given to proving commonplaces and inclined to remain on the surface of things. Smith, like Macaulay, fully understands the advantage of putting the concrete for the abstract, and hammering obvious truths into men's heads by dint of homely explanation. Smith's memory does not supply so vast a store of parallels as that upon which Macaulay could draw so freely; but his humourous illustrations are more amusing and effective. There could not be a happier way of putting the argument for what may be called the lottery system of endowments than the picture of the respectable baker driving past Northumberland House to St. Paul's Churchyard and speculating on the chance of elevating his "little muffin-faced son" to a place among the Percies or the highest seat in the Cathedral. Macaulay would have enforced his reasoning by a catalogue of successful ecclesiastics. The folly of alienating Catholic sympathies, during our great struggle, by maintaining the old disabilities, is brought out with equal skill by the apologue in the *Plymley Letters* of the orthodox captain of a frigate in a dangerous action, securing twenty or thirty of his crew, who happened to be Papists, under a Protestant guard, reminding his sailors in a bitter harangue that they are of different religions; exhorting the Episcopal gunner to distrust the Presbyterian quartermaster; rushing through blood and brains to examine his men in the Thirty-Nine Articles, and forbidding any one to sponge or ram who has not taken the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. It is quite another question whether Smith really penetrates to the bottom of the question; but the only fault to be found with his statement of the case, as he saw it, is that it makes it rather too clear. The arguments are never all on one side in any political question, and the writer who sees absolutely no difficulty suggests to a wary reader that he is ignoring something relevant. Still, this is hardly an objection to a popular advocate, and it is fair to add that Smith's logic is not more admirable than the hearty generosity of his sympathy with the oppressed Catholic. The appeal to cowardice is lost in the appeal to true philanthropic sentiment.

With all his merits, there is a less favourable side to Smith's advocacy. When he was condemned as being too worldly and facetious for a priest, it was easy to retort that humour is not of necessity irreligious. It might be added that in his writings it is strictly subservient to solid argument. In a London party he might throw the reins upon the neck of his fancy and go on playing with a ludicrous image till his audience felt the agony of laughter to be really painful. In his writings, he aims almost as straight at his mark as Swift, and is never diverted by the spirit of pure fun. The humour always illuminates well-strung logic. But the scandal was not quite groundless. When he

directs his powers against sheer obstruction and antiquated prejudice—against abuses in prisons or the game-laws or education—we can have no fault to find; nor is it fair to condemn a reviewer because in all these questions he is a follower rather than a leader. It is enough if he knows a good cause when he sees it, and does his best to back up reformers in the press, though hardly a working reformer, and certainly not an originator of reform. But it is less easy to excuse his want of sympathy for the reformers themselves.

If there is one thing which Sydney Smith dreads and dislikes, it is enthusiasm. Nobody would deny, at the present day, that the zeal which supplied the true leverage for some of the greatest social reforms of the time was to be found chiefly amongst the so-called Evangelicals and Methodists. For them, Smith has nothing but the heartiest aversion. He is always having a quiet jest at the religious sentiments of Perceval or Wilberforce, and his most prominent articles in the *Review* were a series of inexcusably bitter attacks upon the Methodists. He is thoroughly alarmed and disgusted by their progress. He thinks them likely to succeed, and says that, if they succeed, "happiness will be destroyed, reason degraded, and sound religion banished from the world:" and that a reign of fanaticism will be succeeded by "a long period of the grossest immorality, atheism, and debauchery." He is not sure that any remedy or considerable palliative is possible, but he suggests, as hopeful, the employment of ridicule, and applies it himself most unsparingly. When the Methodists try to convert the Hindoos, he attacks them furiously for endangering the empire. They naturally reply that a Christian is bound to propagate his belief. The answer, says Smith, is short: "It is not Christianity which is introduced (into India), but the debased nonsense and mummery of the Methodists, which has little more to do with the Christian religion than it has to do with the religion of China." The missionaries, he says, are so foolish, "that the natives almost instinctively duck and pelt them," as, one cannot help remembering, other missionaries have been ducked and pelted. He pronounces the enterprise to be hopeless and cruel, and clenches his argument by a statement which sounds strangely enough in the mouth of a sincere Christian:—

> Let us ask (he says) if the Bible is universally diffused in Hindostan, what must be the astonishment of the natives to find that we are forbidden to rob, murder, and steal—we who, in fifty years, have, extended our empire from a few acres about Madras over the whole peninsula and sixty millions of people, and exemplified in our public conduct every crime of which human nature is capable? What matchless impudence to follow up such practice with such precepts! If we have common prudence, let us keep the gospel at home, and tell them that Machiavel is our prophet and the god of the Manichæans our god.

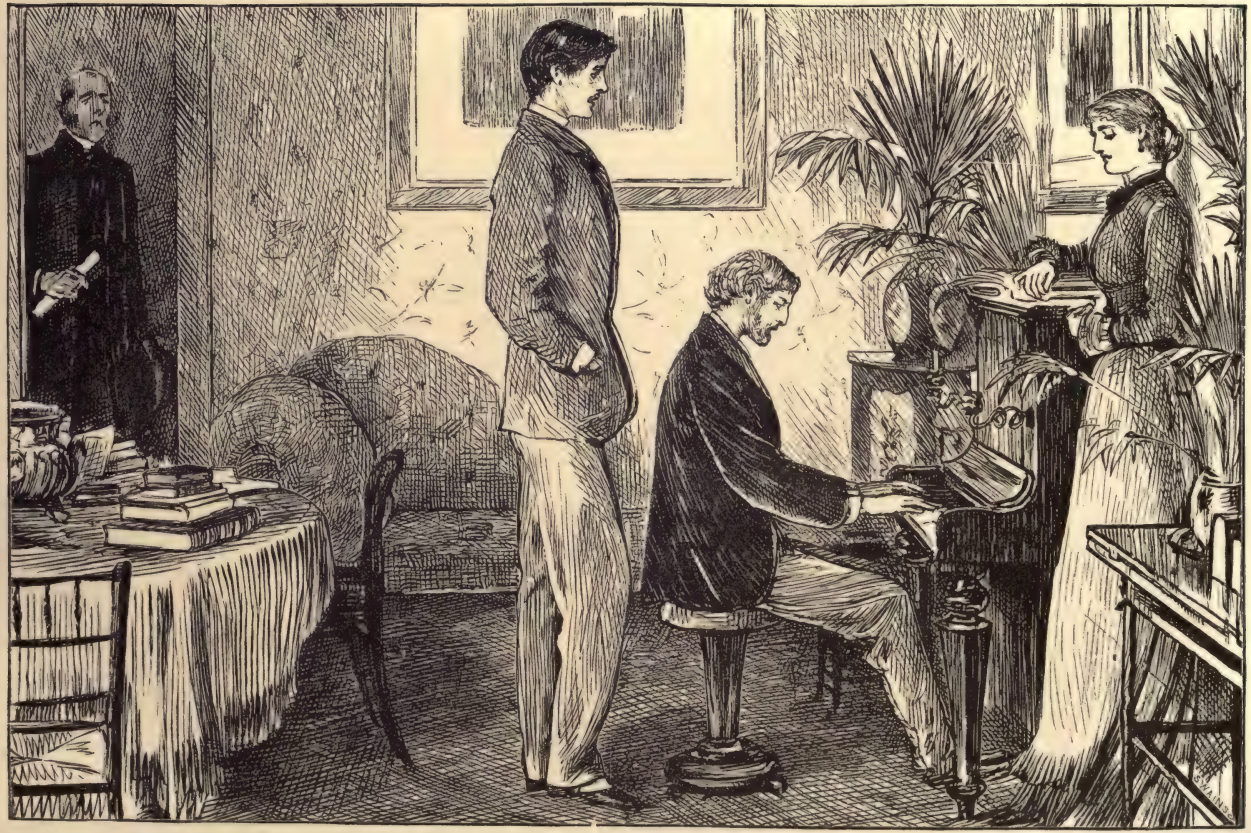
We are to make our practice consistent by giving up our virtues instead of our vices. Of course, Smith ends his article by a phrase about "the slow, solid, and temperate introduction of Christianity;" but the

Methodists might well feel that the "matchless impudence" was not all on their side, and that this Christian priest, had he lived some centuries earlier, would have sympathised a good deal more with Gallio than with St. Paul.

It is a question which I need not here discuss how far Smith could be justified in his ridicule of men who, with all their undeniable absurdity, were at least zealous believers in the creed which he—as is quite manifest—held in all sincerity. But one remark is obvious; the Edinburgh reviewers justify, to a certain point, the claim put forward by Sydney Smith; they condemned many crying abuses, and condemned them heartily. They condemned them, as thoroughly sensible men of the world, animated partly by a really generous sentiment, partly by a tacit scepticism as to the value of the protected interests, and above all by the strong conviction that it was quite essential for the middle party, that is, for the bulk of the respectable well-bred classes to throw overboard gross abuses which afforded so many points of attack to thoroughgoing radicals. On the other hand, they were quite indifferent or openly hostile to most of the new forces which stirred men's minds. They patronised political economy because Malthus began by opposing the revolutionary dreams of Godwin and his like. But every one of the great impulses of the time was treated by them in an antagonistic spirit. They savagely ridiculed Coleridge, the great seminal mind of one philosophical school; they fiercely attacked Bentham and James Mill, the great leaders of the antagonist school; they were equally opposed to the Evangelicals who revered Wilberforce, and, in later times, to the religious party, of which Dr. Newman was the great ornament; in poetry they clung, as long as they could, to the safe old principles represented by Crabbe and Rogers; they covered Wordsworth and Coleridge with almost unmixed ridicule, ignored Shelley, and were only tender to Byron and Scott, because Scott and Byron were fashionable idols. The truth is, that it is a mistake to suppose that the eighteenth century ended with the year 1800. It lasted in the upper currents of opinion till at least 1832. Sydney Smith's theology is that of Paley and the common-sense divines of the previous period. Jeffrey's politics were but slightly in advance of the true old Whigs, who still worshipped according to the tradition of their fathers in Holland House. The ideal of the party was to bring the practice of the country up to the theory whose main outlines had been accepted in the Revolution of 1688; and they studiously shut their eyes to any newer intellectual and social movements.

I do not say this by way of simple condemnation; for we have daily more reason to acknowledge the immense value of calm, clear, common sense, which sees the absurd side of even the best impulses. But it is necessary to bear the fact in mind when estimating such claims as those put forward by Sydney Smith. The truth seems to be that the *Edinburgh Review* enormously raised the tone of periodical literature at the time, by opening an arena for perfectly independent discussion.

Its great merit, at starting, was that it was no mere publisher's organ, like its rivals, and that it paid contributors well enough to attract the most rising talent of the day. As the *Review* progressed, its capacities became more generally understood, and its writers, as they rose to eminence and attracted new allies, put more genuine work into articles certain to obtain a wide circulation and to come with great authority. This implies a long step towards the development of the present system whose merits and defects would deserve a full discussion—the system, according to which much of the most solid and original work of the time first appears in periodicals. The tone of periodicals has been enormously raised, but the effect upon general literature may be more questionable. But the *Edinburgh* was not in its early years a journal with a mission, or the organ of an enthusiastic sect. Rather it was the instrument used by a number of very clever young men to put forward the ideas current in the more liberal section of the upper classes, with much occasional vigour and a large infusion of common sense, but also with abundant flippancy and superficiality, and, in a literary sense, without that solidity of workmanship which is essential for enduring vitality.



"Drink to me only with thine eyes."

"For Percival."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Short Reckonings make Long Friends.

IT was the 1st of March, and a wild wind was hurrying shreds of white cloud across the blue. Percival had taken his breakfast in snatches, performing on his bell meanwhile. Emma had not brought his boots, and would not so much as come to be told that he wanted them. At last, despairing, he went out on the landing and shouted his request to her, as she shuffled on some errand below. Turning to go back, he met Miss Lisle, who had just come down the stairs behind him.

They stood for a moment exchanging trivial remarks. To them came a stout, fresh-coloured, peculiarly innocent-looking old man, who went by with a beaming smile, and a slight bow.

"That's Mr. Fordham," said Judith; "I don't think I ever saw him so close before."

"No; one hardly meets him from one week's end to another. He is unusually late this morning."

"He *looks* a very quiet, steady—really one might take him for rather a nice old man."

Percival stared blankly at her, and then began to laugh. "Well, Miss Lisle, I never heard a reputation blighted so completely by a complimentary sentence before."

Judith blushed a little. "But he isn't very nice, is he?"

"I don't know about nice. I should say he was as steady and harmless an old fellow as ever lived. What *do* you mean?"

"Well—" Judith hesitated. "Of course one has no business to judge any one without really knowing. But his staying out so late at night——"

"So late at night!" Percival repeated.

"I suppose he has a latch key generally. But one or two nights I am sure Miss Bryant sat up to let him in. I heard them whispering,

at least I heard her. I don't think that girl could even whisper quietly."

"But there must be some mistake. Fordham comes in quite early, and very often he doesn't go out at all in the evening."

"He goes out later," said Judith.

"Indeed, no. I could time all his movements. His room is next mine, and the wall is not so thick as I could wish. He snores sometimes."

"But," she persisted, looking scared and white—yet what was Fordham to her?—"But I have heard him over and over again, Mr. Thorne, I can't be mistaken."

Percival was disconcerted, too. He looked at the carpet, at his slippered feet, at anything but her face. "You have heard some one, I suppose; I don't know who comes in late. Not poor old Fordham." He heard Emma on the stairs, and hurried to meet her. Coming back, with his boots in his hand, he found Judith standing exactly as he had left her.

"I'm sure I beg Mr. Fordham's pardon," she said with a smile. "One does make curious mistakes, certainly. That nice-looking old man!" And nodding farewell to young Thorne, she went away.

He did not see her again for two days, though he watched anxiously for her. Bertie came in and out, and was much as usual. On the third evening, as Percival was going upstairs, she called after him, "Mr. Thorne."

He turned eagerly.

"You lent Bertie some money a day or two since?"

Something in her voice or her look made Percival sure that Lisle had borrowed and spent it without her knowledge, and that it was a trouble to her. After all, what did it matter? He would sell his watch, and pay Mrs. Bryant. He could not deny Bertie's debt, since she had found it out, but he could make light of it.

So he nodded. "Yes, by the way, I believe I did. He hadn't his purse or something." This in a tone of airy indifference.

"Tell me how much it was, please, and I'll pay it back." Then he saw that her purse was open in her hand.

"Oh, it doesn't matter," he said; "don't pay me off in such a quick, business-like way, Miss Lisle. I'm not the milkman, nor yet the washing. Bertie will settle with me one of these days."

"Please tell me, Mr. Thorne. I mean to pay it. I must."

"Well, I'll ask him about it then."

"*You* know," with a look of reproach and pleading.

Percival could not deceive her, she looked so sorrowfully resolute. He met the glance of her grey eyes.

"Two pounds," he said, and was certain that she was relieved at the answer.

"Bertie wasn't sure it wasn't two pounds ten."

"On my honour, no. He asked me for a couple of sovereigns, and I took it literally."

"If you say so, I am sure. I didn't doubt you. I only told you that you might understand why I asked." She put the money, a sovereign and two halves, into his unwilling hand. Then he understood her relief, for looking down into the little sealskin purse, he saw that there was no more gold in it. The last ten shillings must have been counted out in silver, and he was not quite sure it would not have ended in a threepenny piece, and some halfpence.

"Now I am going to ask a favour," she said. "Don't lend Bertie any more, please. He has been used to spend just what he liked, and he doesn't think, poor boy. And it is only wasted. Don't let him have any more."

"But, Miss Lisle," said Percival, "if your brother asks me, do you mean that I am to say 'No'?"

"Please—if you would. He mustn't be extravagant, we can't afford it. He can't pay you back, and if I lost any of my work—Mrs. Barton's lessons, for instance—I couldn't either."

"*You* work to pay *me*!" exclaimed Percival aghast; "I won't hear of such a thing. Miss Lisle, you mustn't! It's between Bertie and myself, and I shouldn't be ruined if he didn't pay me till his ship comes home one of these days. Take it back, please, and he and I will arrange it."

She shook her head. "No! my brother's debts are mine."

"Ah!" said Percival, with a swift, eloquent glance. "Then let me be your creditor a little longer; I hardly know what it feels like, yet."

"Since when has *your* ship come home, Mr. Thorne, that you can afford to be so generous?"

The blood mounted to his forehead at her question, but he answered quickly:

"My ship has not come home. Perhaps if it had I should not dare to ask you to let me help you. I feel as if our poverty made us all nearer together."

"It is not every one who would say so in your place," Judith replied. "I *am* your debtor, for those words. But we Lisles have wronged you too much already; you shouldn't try to make the load heavier."

"Wronged me?" he faltered.

"Did you think I did not know? My father had your money and ruined you, deny it if you can! I suspected it, and lately I have been sure. Oh, if Bertie and I could pay you back! But meanwhile he shall not borrow from you, and waste your earnings on his silly whims. If you lend him any more you may try to hide it from me, but I shall find it out, and I will pay it, every farthing. I will find some way, if I have to sit up every night for a week, and work my fingers to the bone!"

"God forbid!" said Percival. "He shall have no more from me. But be generous, and promise me, that if you *should* want help, such as my poverty can give, you will forget old times, and come to me."

"No, I won't promise that. I will remember them, and come!" She caught his hand, pressed it one moment in her own, flung it from her, and escaped.

"Judith!" he called after her, but she was gone.

Percival went into his own room. The money had come just in time, for his landlady's weekly account was lying on the table. He looked at the three coins with lingering tenderness, and, after a moment's hesitation, he took one of them, and vowed that he would never part with it. Yet, in the midst of his ardent resolution, he smiled rather bitterly to think that it was not the sovereign, but one of the halves, he meant to keep for ever. Poverty had taught him many lessons, and among them, how to combine economy and sentiment. "If she had given me the ten shillings' worth of silver, I suppose I should have saved the threepenny bit!" he said to himself, as he locked his little remembrance in his desk.

A couple of days later, as he was walking home with Bertie, they passed three or four men who were sauntering idly along; and Thorne felt sure that his companion received, and returned, a silent glance of recognition. He glanced over his shoulder at them, and disliked their look exceedingly.

"Do you know who those fellows were we passed just now?" he said.

Bertie looked back. "One is the brother of a man in our choir."

"Hm! I wouldn't have one of them for my brother at any price," said Percival. The matter dropped, but he could not forget it. He fancied that there was a slight change in Bertie himself, that the boy's face was keener and haggard, and that there was an anxious expression in his eyes. But he owned frankly that he was not at all sure that he should have noticed anything if his suspicions had not been previously aroused.

"Come in this evening," said Bertie, when they went upstairs. He leant against the door of Percival's room, and as his friend hesitated he called to his sister: "Here, Judith! tell Thorne to come and have some tea with us; they've let his fire out, and his room is as warm and cheerful as a sepulchre."

"Do you think I order other people about as I do you?" she replied. "Will you come, Mr. Thorne? I can at any rate promise you a fire and a welcome."

When she met him she was quite calm, tranquil, and clear-eyed. Do the ripples of the summer sea recall that distant line, the supreme effort of wind and tide some stormy night? Percival would have thought that it had been all a dream, but for the little coin which that wave had flung

at his feet for a remembrance. And he had called after her "Judith!" The tide had ebbed, and he did not even think of her as other than Miss Lisle. Had she heard him that evening? He would almost have hoped not, but that twilight moment seemed so far away that it must be absurd to link it with his everyday life.

Apparently she and Bertie were on their usual footing. Did the young fellow know of that absurd mistake about old Fordham? Did Percival really detect a shade of dim apprehension on Judith Lisle's face, as if she hid an unspoken fear? As Bertie leant forward, and the lamplight shone on his clearly-cut features, Percival was more than ever certain of the change in him. Could his sister fail to see it?

"Bertie," she said, when they had finished their tea, and were standing round the fire; "Bertie, I'm afraid you have lost one of your pupils."

He had his elbow on the chimney-piece, his hand hung loosely open, and his eyes were fixed upon the leaping flames. When Judith spoke he looked up inquiringly.

"Miss Nash—Emmeline Nash," said Judith.

Percival happened to be looking at the fire, too, and he suddenly saw Bertie's fingers drawn quickly up. But the young master spoke very composedly indeed: "Emmeline Nash—why? Has anything happened?"

"No! only Mr. Nash has given in at last, and says she may go home at Easter for good. She is older than any of the other pupils, Mr. Thorne; in fact, she is not treated as a pupil. But her father is——"

"An old fossil!" said Bertie.

"Well—interested in fossils, and that sort of thing, and a widower; so there has not been much of a home for her, and he always fancied she was better at school. But school can't last for ever——"

"Happiest time of one's life!" Bertie ejaculated.

"Oh! do you think so?" said Judith, doubtfully.

"Not at all! But I believe it is the right thing to say."

"Stupid boy! And as she will very soon be twenty, I really think she ought not to be kept there any longer."

"Of course Miss Nash is delighted," said Percival.

"Yes, but hardly as much so as I expected. One's castles in the air don't look quite the same when one is close to them. I am afraid her home life won't be very bright."

"Perhaps she will make it brighter," said Thorne. "What is she like? Is she pretty?"

"Yes," said Bertie.

Judith smiled. "One has to qualify all one's adjectives for her. She is nice-ish, pretty-ish; I doubt if she is as much as clever-ish."

"No need for her to be any more," Bertie remarked. "Didn't Miss Crawford say she would come in for a lot of money, some of her mother's, when she was one-and-twenty?"

"Yes—five or six hundred a year."

"That's why he has kept her at school, I suppose. Afraid she should take up with a curate, very likely."

"Mr. Nash is very rich too, and she is an only child," said Judith, ignoring Bertie's remark. "But I think it has been hard on Emmeline."

"Well, I'm sorry she is going," said Lisle, "*very* sorry."

"Is she such a promising pupil?" Thorne inquired.

"She's a nice girl," said Bertie, "but a promising pupil—O Lord!" He flew to the piano, played an air in a singularly wooden manner, and then dragged it languidly, yet laboriously, up and down the keys. "Variations, you perceive." After a little more of this treatment, the unfortunate melody grew very lame indeed, and finally died of exhaustion.

"That's Miss Emmeline Nash!" said Bertie, spinning round on the music-stool, and confronting Percival.

"It is very like Emmeline's style of playing," Judith owned.

"Of course it is. Let's have something else for a change." And turning back to the piano he began to sing. Then he called Judith to come and take her turn. She sang well, and Percival, by the fireside, noted the young fellow's evident pride in her performance, and admired the pair. (Anyone else might have admired the three, for Thorne's grave, foreign-looking face was just the fitting contrast to the Lisles' fair, clear features. The morbid depression of a couple of months earlier had passed, and left him far more like the Percival of Brackenhill. Poverty surrounded the friends and dulled their lives, but as yet it was only a burden, not a blight.)

"You sing," said Bertie, looking back. "I remember you were great at some of those old songs. I'll play for you—what shall it be?"

"I'm sure I hardly know," said Percival, coming forward.

"Let's have 'Shall I, wasting in despair?'" Lisle suggested. "It has been going in my head all this morning." He played a few notes.

"No, no!" the other exclaimed hurriedly. "Not that." Too well he remembered the tender devotion of more than a year before:

> If she love me, this believe,
> I will die ere she shall grieve.

Sissy and Brackenhill rose before him—the melancholy orchard walk, the little hands which lay in his on that November day. He felt a dull pain, yet what could he do, what could he have done? There was a terrible mistake somewhere, but he could not say where. If he had married Sissy, would it not have been there? He woke up suddenly—young Lisle was speaking, and Judith was saying, "Let Mr. Thorne choose."

"Oh, I don't mind," said Percival. "Shall it be 'Drink to me only with thine eyes?'"

He sang it well. His voice was strong and full, and the sweet old-fashioned courtesy of compliment suited him exactly. The last word had scarcely left his lips, when the door opened, and Emma showed in Mr. Clifton, of St. Sylvester's.

The clergyman came forward, black-coated, smooth-shaven, with watchful glances, which seemed ever looking out for that lay co-operation we hear so much of now. Lisle looked over his shoulder, and sprang up to receive him. The visitor tried to get his umbrella and two or three books into the hand which already held his hat, and one little volume fell to the floor. Percival picked it up and smoothed the pages. "Mr. Thorne—Mr. Clifton," said the young organist, as the book was restored to its owner. Percival bowed gravely, and Mr. Clifton did not shake hands, as he would have done if the young man's manner had been less reserved. He was lavish of such greetings. A clergyman might shake hands with any one.

"I'll not detain you long, Lisle," he said. "But I wanted to speak to you about the choir practice to-morrow." And there ensued a little business talk between parson and organist. Judith took up a bit of work, and Percival leant against the chimney-piece. Presently Lisle went back to the piano, and tried over a hymn tune which Mr. Clifton had brought. The clergyman stood solemnly by. "I met Gordon a few minutes ago," he said. "He was with his brother, and some other men of the same stamp. If he mixes himself up with that set, he must go."

"You'll miss him in the choir, Mr. Clifton," said Bertie.

"He must choose between such associates and the choir," the other replied. The words were moderate enough, but the tone was austere.

"Especially at Easter," said Bertie, still playing.

"What of that?" demanded the other. "I would rather have no choir at St. Sylvester's, than have men in it, whose way of life during the week made a mockery of the praises they sang on Sundays."

He spoke in a low voice, and Bertie's playing partially covered the conversation. "Perhaps, Mr. Clifton, if Gordon understood how much you disapproved"—the young organist began.

"Gordon—Gordon—it isn't only Gordon who should understand. Every one should understand my feeling on such a subject, without my having to explain it. But I won't keep you any longer now; it is getting late. Remember, seven o'clock to-morrow evening." And with a polite remark or two to the others, Mr. Clifton bowed himself out, with Bertie in attendance. The procession of two might have been more dignified, if the organist had not made a face at Judith and Percival as he went out at the door, and if he had not danced a fantastic but noiseless dance on the landing, behind the incumbent of St. Sylvester's, who was feeling feebly, in the dim light, for the top step of Mrs. Bryant's staircase.

"Is anything the matter with Mr. Clifton?" Judith asked, when the boy came back and executed another war-dance all round the room. "He didn't seem pleased, I thought."

Bertie brought himself up with a grand flourish opposite the arm-chair, and sank into it. "Bless you, no, there's nothing the matter with him. Tumbled out of bed the wrong side this morning—that's all. He does, sometimes."

"Might have got over that by this time of night, one would think," said Percival, looking at his watch.

"Hold hard—you aren't going yet," exclaimed Bertie, bounding up. "Here, Judith, let's have another song to take the taste of old Clifton out of our mouths. Whatever possessed him to come here to-night?"

They had two or three songs instead of one, and then Percival went off. Judith put her work away, shut up the piano, and laid Bertie's music straight. He stood meanwhile with his back to the dying fire, idly chinking some money which he had taken from his waistcoat pocket, a half-crown and two or three shillings. His brows were drawn down as if he were lost in thought. Presently his half-crown went spinning in the air, he caught it dexterously—heads. Bertie half smiled to himself, as who should say, "Well, if Destiny will have it so, what am I that I should resist it?"

It is very well to toss up, if you have already come to a decision which you cannot quite justify. Should the verdict be adverse, it is no worse than it was before, for, if you have really made up your mind, so trivial an accident will not stop you. It may even be your duty to show that you attach no superstitious importance to it. And, on the other hand, if chance favours you, some of your burden of responsibility is transferred to the shoulders of fate.

So Bertie smiled, pocketed his half-crown, kissed his sister, and went off to his own room, whistling on his way thither with peculiar distinctness and perseverance.

Nearly an hour later, two figures stood by the dim light in the passage, and conversed in whispers.

"Now, my charming Lydia, how about that key?"

"I'll charming Lydia you," was the reply. "I like your impudence!"

"I know you do. You shall have some more when I've time to spare. But now I must really be off. Get me the key, there's a dear girl."

"I can't, then. If you want a latch-key, why don't you go to Ma, and say so like a man! There it is, and you'd have it directly."

"Oh most unreasonable Lydia! How many times must I explain to you that that wouldn't do, because your Ma, while she possesses many of the charms, is not quite exempt from the weakness of her sex—in short, Lydia, she talks."

"Well, what then? If I were a man I wouldn't be afraid of my sister! I'd be my own master——"

"So will I," said Bertie Lisle.

"And I'd say what I meant, right out. I would!"

"If you knew there'd be a fuss, and people anxious about you? Would you?" He yawned. "No—I'll be my own master, but I like to do things quietly."

"I don't care so much about that," said Lydia, whose feelings were less delicate. To struggle openly for an avowed object seemed to her the most natural thing in the world, and she would have preferred her independence to be conspicuous. She did not understand that with men of Bertie's stamp it is not the latch-key itself, but the unsuspected latch-key, which confers the liberty they love.

"Well?" said he. "Am I to stay here all night?"

"That's just what you'd better do. You won't get any good out of that lot, and so I tell you. You'll lose your money, and get into nasty, drinking ways—don't you go there any more!"

"Upon my word, Lydia, you preach as well as old Clifton does."

"And do you just as much good, I daresay."

"Just as much. You've hit it exactly."

"I thought so. You aren't the sort to take any heed. One may preach and preach——"

"How well you understand me! No, as you say, I'm not the sort to get any good from preaching. You are quite right, Lydia, my character requires kindness, sympathy, and a latch-key—especially requires a latch-key."

"Especially requires a fiddlestick," said Lydia, and, disregarding his smiling "Not at all," she went on in an injured tone, "There's Ma worrying over accounts, and likely to worry for the next hour. How am I to get a key from under her very nose?"

Lisle seemed to reflect. "Old Fordham doesn't have one, I suppose?"

"Gracious, no—not he! If you gave him one, he'd drop it as if it was red-hot. He thinks they're wicked."

There was a pause, but, after a few moments, there stole through the silence a sweetly insinuating voice, "Then, Lydia——"

Lydia half turned away, and put up her left shoulder.

"Then, Lydia, I suppose you wouldn't——"

"You'd better keep on supposing I wouldn't."

"Can't suppose such cruelty for more than a moment. Can't really. No, listen to me"—this with a change of voice—"I must go out this evening, upon my soul it's important. I'm in a fix, Lydia. I've not breathed a word to any one else, and wouldn't for worlds, but you'll not let it out, I know. If I'm lucky enough to get out of the scrape to-night, I'll never get into it again, I can tell you."

"You will," said Lydia.

"I swear I won't. And if not——"

"Well—if not?"

"Why I must try another plan to get free. I shan't like it, but I must. But there'll be a row, and I shall have to go away. I'd a good deal rather not."

"What sort of plan?" she asked curiously.

"Desperate!" he answered, and shook his head.

"What is it?" Her eyes were widely opened in excitement and alarm. "You ain't going to be driven to forge something, like people in novels? Or—or—it isn't a big robbery, is it? Oh you wouldn't!"

The face opposite looked so smiling, and candid, and innocent, that it made the words she had hazarded an obvious absurdity, even to herself, as soon as she had uttered them.

"Why not a murder?" said Lisle. "I think it shall be a murder. Upon my word, you're complimentary! No, no, I don't mean to try my hand at any of them." She smiled, relieved. "But I must go out to-night. Lydia, will you let me in once more?"

"Once more? You won't ask again?"

"Never again."

There was a pause. "Didn't you say that last time?"

"Lydia, you are the unkindest girl!"

"Well then, I will."

"No, you are the kindest."

"Just this once more. Mind you tap very gently, and I'll be awake. But do be careful. It frightens me so."

When the house was full of lodgers the Bryants stowed themselves away in any odd corners. At this time Lydia occupied a large cupboard —by courtesy called a small room—close to their stuffy little back parlour. Lisle would go to the yard behind the house, which was common to two or three besides No. 13, and with one foot on a projecting bit of brick-work could get his hand on the sill, and make his signal.

"Some day the police 'll take you for a burglar," said Lydia, encouragingly. "Well, go and enjoy yourself."

"It *is* a shame to keep you up so long, isn't it? What do you do all the time, eh, Lydia?"

"Sit in the dark, mostly, and think what a fool I'm making of myself."

"Don't do that. Think how good you are to a poor fellow in trouble. That will be better—won't it? But I must be off—good-by, you kind Lydia."

He stooped forward and kissed her, taking her hands in his. He found it convenient to pay his debt in this coin, his creditor being passably pretty. Not that Bertie had any taste for indiscriminate kissing. Had he had five thousand a year, and had Lydia rendered him a service, he would have recompensed her with some of his superfluous gold. But as he only had his salary as organist, and what he could make by giving music lessons, he paid her with kisses instead. He had no particular objection, and was it not his duty to be economical, for Judith's sake as well as his own?

"Go along with you!" said Lydia, and the young man, who had achieved his purpose, and had no reason for prolonging the interview,

stole laughingly downstairs, waving a farewell as he vanished round the corner. Lydia stood as if she were rooted to the ground, listening intently. She heard the door opened, very gently, and closed with infinite precautions. She still stood till she had counted a hundred under her breath, and then, judging that Mrs. Bryant had not been disturbed by his stealthy exit, she went down to fasten it. She was prepared with an answer if she should be caught in the act, but she was glad to get away undetected, for an excuse, which is perfectly satisfactory at the time, may be very unsatisfactory indeed, when viewed by the light of later events. So Lydia rejoiced when she found herself safe in her own room, though she pursued her usual train of meditation in that refuge. She appraised Lisle's gratitude and kisses pretty accurately, and was angry with herself that she should care to have them, knowing that they were worthless. Yet, as she sat there, she said his name to herself, "Bertie," as she had heard his sister call him. And she knew well that it was pleasant to her to be thrilled by Bertie's eyes and lips, pleasant to feel Bertie's soft palms and slim strong fingers pressing those hands of hers, on which she had just been trying experiments with a new wash. Lydia looked thoughtfully into her looking-glass, and took her reflection into her confidence. "Ain't you a silly?" she said to the phantom which fingered its long curl and silently moved its lips. "Oh you are!" said the girl, "and there's no denying it." She shook her head, and her *vis-à-vis* shook its head in the dim dusk, as much as to say, "No more a fool than you are yourself, Lydia." "Nobody could be," said Lydia moodily.

She did not deem it prudent to keep her light burning very late, and she had a long vigil before the signal came, the three soft taps at her window. She was prepared for it. Every sound had grown painfully distinct to her anxious ears, and she had been almost certain that she knew Lisle's hurried yet stealthy step, as he turned into the yard. She crept to the door and opened it, her practised hand recognising the fastenings in the dark. The light from the street lamp just outside fell on Bertie's white face. "What luck?" she asked in a whisper.

"Curse the luck!" he answered; "everything went against me from first to last."

"I told you so," she whispered, closing the door. "Didn't I say that——"

"Don't—there's a good girl," said Bertie softly, somewhere in the shadows.

Lydia was silent, and shot the bolts very skilfully. But the key made a little grating noise as she turned it, and the two stood for a moment holding their breath. "All right," said Lisle after a pause.

"It's late," said Lydia. He could not deny it. "You must take your boots off before you go up," she continued. "And do be careful."

He obeyed. "Good-night," he whispered. "You'll see that girl calls me in good time to-morrow? I feel as if I should sleep for a century or so." He yawned wearily. "I wish I could!"

"*I* ain't to be sleepy I suppose—why should I be?" she answered, but added hurriedly, "No, no, you shall be called all right."

"You good girl," whispered Lisle, and he went noiselessly away. A dim gaslight burned half-way up the stairs and guided him to his room. He had only to softly open and close his door and all was well. Judith had not been awakened by the cat-like steps of the man who was not old Fordham. She had fallen asleep very happily, with a vague sense of hopefulness and well-being. She had no idea that Bertie had just flung himself on his bed to snatch a little rest, with a trouble on his mind, which, had she known it, would have effectually banished sleep from her eyes; and a hope of escape, which would have nearly broken her heart. Her burden had been laid aside for a few hours, and through her dreams there ran a golden thread of melody, the unconscious remembrance of that evening's songs and music.

CHAPTER XL.

Bertie at the Organ.

Bertie was duly called, and came down the next morning, punctually enough, but somewhat weary and pale. A slight headache was supposed to account for his looks. Lydia complained of the same thing over her breakfast of bacon downstairs. But Fate was partial, for Bertie's marble pallor and the faint shadow beneath his eyes were utterly unlike poor Lydia's dull complexion, and heavy, red-rimmed eyelids. She was conscious of this injustice, and felt in a dim way that she had proved herself capable of one of those acts of self-devotion, which are the more admirable that they are sure not to be admired. But the longer she thought of it, the more she felt that this noble deed was not one to be repeated. One must set bounds to one's heroism. "I can't go on losing my beauty sleep in this fashion," said Lydia to herself. "I do look such a horrid fright the next day."

When Judith had gone to Standon Square Bertie yawned, stretched himself, got out his little writing-case, and sat down to write a letter. He spent some time over it, erasing and interlining, balancing himself on two legs of his chair, while he looked for stray words on the ceiling, or murmured occasional sentences to judge of the effect. At last it was finished, and, being copied in a dashing hand, looked very spontaneous indeed. "I think that ought to do it," he said to himself, as he smoked his pipe, glancing over the pages. "I think it *will* do it." He smiled in the pride of triumphant authorship, but presently there came a line between his brows, and a puzzled expression to his face. "I'll be shot if I know how it is to be managed afterwards. People do it—but how? I wonder if Thorne knows. If law is at all catching, a year of that musty office must have given him a touch of it." Lisle considered the matter

for a few minutes, and then shrugged his shoulders. "It won't do, I'm afraid. I daren't try him. I'm never quite clear how much he sees and understands, nor what he would do. And Gordon?—no." There was another reverie. Finally he arose, knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and stretched himself once more. "I've got to depend on myself, it seems to me. I must set my wits to work and astonish them all. But oh, if yawning were but a lucrative employment, how easily I could make money, and be quit of the whole affair!"

Bertie took a great interest in his personal appearance, and was frank and unaffected in his consciousness of his good looks. He caught a glimpse of his reflection in the bottle-green mirror, and stopped short in considerable anxiety. "Brain-work and these late hours don't suit me," he said. "Good heavens! I look quite careworn! Well, it may pass for the effect of a gradually breaking heart—why not?"

A glance at his watch roused him to sudden activity. He carefully burnt every scrap of his original manuscript, feeling sure that Lydia would read his letter if she had the chance. He looked leniently on this little weakness of hers. "Very happy to afford you what little amusement I can in the general way," he soliloquised, as he directed an envelope; "but I really can't allow you to read this letter, Lydia, my dear." Apparently he was in a distrustful mood, for after hesitating a moment he got some wax, and sealed it with a ring he wore. Then, putting it carefully in his pocket, he tossed a few sheets of blotted music paper on the table, left his writing-case wide open, took his hat and a roll of music, and went out in the direction of St. Sylvester's, trying to work out his problem as he walked. He was not, however, so deep in thought that he had no eyes for the passers-by, and his attention was suddenly attracted by a servant-girl dawdling along the opposite pavement. He watched her keenly, but furtively, as if to make quite sure, and when she turned down a side street, he followed, and speedily overtook her.

"This is lucky!" he ejaculated. "I didn't expect to see you, Susan. What are you doing here?"

She was a slight, plain girl, with a fairly intelligent face, whose expression was doubtful. Sometimes it showed a willingness to please, oftener it was sullen, now and then merely thoughtful. Just at this moment, as she looked up at the young organist, it was crafty and greedy. "I'm taking a note," she said. "Miss Crawford's always a sending me with notes or something."

"You don't mind being sent with notes, do you?" said Bertie, blandly.

"That's as may be," the girl answered.

"I should have thought it was pleasant work. At any rate, it's as easy to take two as one, isn't it?"

"I have to take 'em 'cause I'm paid to, you see—easy or not."

"Oh, of course, you ought to be paid." His fingers were in his

waistcoat pocket, and some coins that chinked agreeably were transferred to her hand, together with the sealed letter. "You've saved me a walk to Standon Square," he said.

The girl laughed, looking down at her money. "It wouldn't have hurt you, I dare say. You oughtn't to make much of a walk there. How about an answer?"

"Oh, I shall get an answer when I come to-morrow." He nodded a careless farewell, and went a little out of his way to avoid Gordon's brother, who was visible in the distance.

Susan turned the missive over in her hand. "It's sealed tight enough," she remarked to herself. "What did he want to do that for?" She eyed it discontentedly. "I hate such suspicious ways. Wouldn't there be a flare-up if I just handed it over to the old maid! I won't, though, for she's give me warning, and he's a deal more free with his money than she'd ever be—stingy old cat! But wouldn't there be a flare-up! My!" And Susan, who had an ungratified taste for the sensational, looked at the address and smiled to think of the power she possessed.

Before she slipped the letter into her pocket she sniffed doubtfully at the envelope, and tossed her head in scorn. "I thought so! Smells of tobacco!" It was true, for Lisle, as we know, had smoked while he revised his composition. "If I were a young man going a courting, I'd scent my letters with rose or something nice, and I'd write 'em on pink paper—I would!" Susan reflected. But Lisle was wiser. There is no perfume, for a young ladies' school, like a whiff of cigar smoke. To that prim, half convent-like seclusion, where manners are being formed, and the proprieties are strictly observed, it comes as a pleasant suggestion of something worldly and masculine, just a little wicked, and altogether delightful.

So Lisle went on his way to St. Sylvester's, lighter of heart for having met Susan, and got rid of the letter. While it was still in his pocket nothing was absolutely settled, in spite of that half-crown which had represented inexorable destiny the night before. But now that it was gone, further thought about it was happily unnecessary, and honour forbade him to draw back. It was true, however, that he was still face to face with the difficulty which had been in his mind when he met his messenger so conveniently.

He caught a street Arab, and promised him twopence, if he would come and blow for him while he practised. But he began by playing absently and carelessly, for, since the letter had been despatched, his problem had become infinitely more urgent, and it thrust itself between him and the music. His fingers roved dreamily over the keys, his eyes wandered, as if in spite of himself, to the east end of the church. All at once he came out with an impatient "How *do* people manage it?" and he finished the muttered question with a strong word, and a big chord.

A moment more, and his face is illuminated with the inward light of a sudden idea. He lets his hands lie where they happened to be, he sits there with parted lips and startled eyes. The idea is almost too wonderful, too simple, too obvious, and yet—"By Jove!" says Bertie, under his breath.

His street Arab means to earn his twopence, and in spite of the silence he pumps away in a cheerful and conscientious manner, till he shall be bidden to stop. The organ protests, in a long and dolorous note, and startles the musician from his reverie. Forthwith he begins to play a stirring march, and the rejoicing chords arise, and rush, and crowd beneath his fingers. Has he indeed found the solution of his great perplexity? Apparently he thinks so. He seems absolutely hurried along in triumph on these waves of jubilant harmony. A ray of pale March sunlight falls on his forehead and shines on his hair, as he tosses his head in the quickening excitement of the moment. His headache is gone, his weariness is gone. The notes seem to gather like bands of armed men, and rush victoriously through the aisles. But, even as he plays, he laughs to himself, a boyish happy laugh, for this great idea which is to help him out of all his difficulties is not only a great idea, but a great joke. And the march rings louder yet, for, with every note he plays, his thought grows clearer to his mind, plainer and more feasible. There is a gay audacity about the laugh which lingers in Bertie's eyes, and on his lips, as if Dan Cupid himself had just been there, whispering some choice scheme of roguish knavery, some artful artlessness, into the young man's ear. Bertie does not acknowledge that his inspiration has come in such a questionable fashion. He says to himself, "It will do, I feel it will do—isn't it providential! Just when I was in despair!" This is a more suitable sentiment for an organist, no doubt, for what possible business can Dan Cupid have at St. Sylvester's? Louder and louder yet pours the great stream of music, and that is a joke too, for Lisle feels as if he were shouting his secret to the four winds, and yet keeping it locked in his inmost soul, taking the passers-by into his confidence in the most open-hearted fashion, and laughing at them in his sleeve. But the musician is exhausted at last, and the end comes with a thundering crash of chords.

"Here, boy, here's sixpence for you; you may be off. We've done enough for to-day, and may go home to Bellevue Street." But it seems to Bertie Lisle, as he picks up his roll of music and comes down the aisle, that Bellevue Street too is only a joke now.

CHAPTER XLI.

Where there's a Will there's a Way.

April had come, and the best of the year was beginning with a yellow dawn of daffodils. The trees stood stern and wintry, but there were little leaves on the honeysuckles and the hawthorn hedges, glad outbursts of song among the branches, and soft, shy caresses in the air. Sissy Langton, riding into Fordborough, was delicately beautiful as spring itself. She missed her squire of an earlier April, and his absence made an underlying sadness in her radiant eyes, which had the April charm. That day her glance and smile had an especial brightness, partly because spring had come, and, though countless springs have passed away, each comes with the old yet ever fresh assurance that it will make all things new. Partly because it was her birthday, and, while we are yet young, there is a certain joy of royalty which marks our birthday mornings. But most of all because that day gave her the power to satisfy a desire which had lain hidden in her heart through the long winter months.

It was the Fordborough market-day, and already, though it was but eleven o'clock, the little town was waking up. Sissy, followed by Mrs. Middleton's staid servant, rode straight to the principal street, and stopped at Mr. Hardwicke's office. Young Hardwicke, reading the paper in his room, was surprised when a clerk announced that Miss Langton was at the door, asking for his father. He forgot the sporting intelligence in an instant. "Well, isn't my father in?"

No, Mr. Hardwicke went out about twenty minutes earlier, and did not say when he should be back. They had told Miss Langton, and she said, "Perhaps Mr. Henry——"

Mr. Henry was off like a shot. He found Sissy on her horse at the door, looking pensively along the street, as if she were studying the effect of dusky red on palest blue—chimney-pots against the April sky.

"So Mr. Hardwicke is out?" she said, when they had shaken hands. "I'm so sorry. I wanted him so particularly."

"Is it important? Are you in a great hurry?" said Henry. "He won't be long, or he would certainly have left word, on a market-day especially. Could you come in and wait a little while?" he suggested. "I suppose I shouldn't do as well?"

"I don't know," said Sissy, looking a little doubtfully at the tall fresh-coloured young fellow, who smiled frankly in reply.

"Oh, it isn't at all likely," said Mr. Henry, with delightful candour. "The governor can't, for the life of him, understand how I make so many blunders. I've a special talent that way, I suppose, but I don't know how I came by it."

"Then perhaps it had better be Mr. Hardwicke. If it were a waltz, now——" and she laughed. "But it isn't a waltz, it is something very important. Do you know anything about wills?"

He looked up in sudden apprehension. "Is it about a will? Mrs. Middleton's? Is anything the matter?"

"No; it isn't Aunt Middleton's. It's mine," was the composed reply. But seeing relief, and almost amusement, on his face, she added hastily, "I *can* make a will, can't I? I'm twenty-one, you know. It's my birthday to-day."

"Then I wish you many happy returns of the day."

"Thank you; but can I make my will?"

"Of course you can make a will."

"A will that will be good," Sissy insisted, still speaking in the low tone she had adopted when she began to explain the object of her visit. "Can I make it here and now?"

"Not on horseback, I think," said Hardwicke, with a smile. "You would be tired of sitting here while we took down all your instructions. It isn't very quick work making ladies' wills. They generally leave no end of legacies. I suppose they are so good, they don't forget anybody."

"Mine won't be like that. Mine will be very short," Sissy said. "And I suppose I am not good, for I shall forget almost everybody in it." She laughed as she said it, yet something in her voice struck Hardwicke as curiously earnest. "I will come in, I think, and tell you about it," she went on. "I want to make it to-day."

"To-day!" he repeated, as he helped her to dismount.

"Yes. I'll tell you," said Sissy, entering his room, "and you'll tell Mr. Hardwicke, won't you? I'll get the Elliotts to give me some luncheon, and then I can come here again between two and three. I shall have to sign it, or something, shan't I? Do tell your father I want it all to be finished to-day."

"I'll tell him."

"Tell him it's my birthday, so of course I must do just as I please, and have everything I want, to-day. I don't know whether that's the law, but I'm sure it ought to be."

"Of course it ought to be," Henry replied, with fervour. "And I think I can undertake to say that it shall be our law, anyhow."

"Thank you," said Sissy. "I shall be so very glad. And it can't take long. I only want him to say that I wish all that I have to go to Percival Thorne."

"To Percival," Hardwicke repeated, with a sensation as if she had suddenly stabbed him. "To Percival Thorne. Yes. Is that all I am to say?"

"That's all. I want it all to be for Percival Thorne, to do just what he likes with it. That can't take long, surely."

Hardwicke bit the end of a penholder that he had picked up, and looked uneasily at her. "You're awfully anxious to get this done, Miss Langton—you aren't ill, are you?"

"Oh, I'm well enough, much better than I was last year," said Sissy,

lightly. "But there's no good in putting things of this sort off, you know"—she dropped her voice—"as poor Mr. Thorne did. And your father said once, that if I didn't make a will when I came of age, my money would all go to Sir Charles Langton. He doesn't really want any more, I should think, for they say he is very rich. And he is only a second cousin of mine, and I have never seen him. It's funny, having so few relations, isn't it?"

"Very," said Hardwicke.

"And some people have such a lot," said Sissy, thoughtfully. "But I always feel as if the Thornes were my relations."

"I suppose so. At any rate, I don't see that Sir Charles Langton has any claim upon you." There was silence for a minute, Sissy drawing an imaginary outline on Hardwicke's carpet with her riding-whip, he following her every movement with his eyes.

"I shall have to sign both my Christian names, I suppose?" she said, abruptly.

"Have you two? I didn't know. What is the other?"

"Jane."

"Jane—I like that," said Henry. "Yes, sign them both."

"Thank you. I don't want to seem like an idiot to your father. I should like it best if I could just write 'Sissy,' and nothing else, as I do at the end of my letters. When I see 'Cecilia Jane Langton,' I feel inclined to call out, 'This is none of I!' like the old woman."

She stood up to go. "You won't forget, will you?"

"No, I won't forget."

"Everything to Percival Thorne."

"Percival Thorne is an uncommonly lucky fellow," said the young man, looking down.

Sissy stopped short, glanced at him, and coloured. In her anxiety she had never considered the light in which the bequest might strike Henry Hardwicke. In fact, she had not thought of him at all, except as a messenger. She was accustomed to take him for granted on any occasion. She had known him all her life, and he was always, in her eyes, the big friendly boy, with whom she pulled crackers, and played blindman's buff, at children's parties. She dreamed of no possible romance with Henry, and did not imagine that he could have such a dream about her. He was as harmless as a brother, without a brother's right to question and criticise. It was precisely that feeling which had been at the root of the friendliness which the Fordborough gossips took for a flirtation. They could not have been more utterly mistaken. She liked Henry Hardwicke; she knew that he was honest, and honourable, and good; but if any one had said that he was a worthy young man, I believe she would have assented. And that is the last adjective which a girl would apply to her ideal.

Sissy's scheme had been in her mind through all the winter, but she had always imagined herself stating her intentions, in a business-like

way, to old Mr. Hardwicke, who was a friend of the family. She had been so thunderstruck when she found that he was out, that she had taken Henry into her confidence at a moment's warning. She dared not risk any delay. It would be impossible to go home, leaving Percival's future insecure. Suppose she died that night—and she was struck with the fantastic coincidence of Mr. Hardwicke's second absence at the critical moment—suppose she felt herself dying, and knew that the only thing she could have done for Percival was left undone! She could not face the possibility of that agony. Indeed she wondered how she had lived through the long hours which had elapsed, since the clock struck twelve, and the day began which made her twenty-one; not the girl Sissy any longer, but the woman who held Percival's fortune in her hands. How could she have gone away with her purpose unfulfilled?

When Henry said "Percival Thorne is an uncommonly lucky fellow," she coloured, but only that transient flush betrayed her, for she answered readily.

"Why, Mr. Hardwicke, what a dreadful thing to say to me! I hope you don't have second sight, or anything horrible of that sort?"

"Second sight," Henry repeated doubtfully, looking down at a little dangling eyeglass, "what's that?"

"Oh, you must know! Isn't it second sight when you can tell if people are going to die? You see them in their winding-sheets, and they are low down if it will only be rather soon. But if it is to be quite directly, their shrouds are wrapped round them, high up. What was mine like, that you said Percival Thorne was so lucky? Up to here?" And, standing before him, she smiled, and touched her chin.

"God forbid!" said Henry. "How can you say such fearful things?"

"Oh! you didn't see it then? I'm very glad."

"Good heavens—no! And I don't believe it. I didn't mean that Thorne would be lucky if you *died!*"

"I can't do him any good any other way," said Sissy, with sweet composure; "but I don't think I'm going to die, so I don't suppose I shall do him any good at all. Do you think this is a strange fancy of mine? The truth is, Aunt Middleton and I have been unhappy about Percival ever since last May, because we know his grandfather meant to have done something for him. He isn't rich, and he ought to have had Brackenhill, so I should like him to have my money if I die. It is only a chance, because I daresay I may live fifty years or so—only fancy!—but I would rather Percival had the chance than Sir Charles. That's all. You'll explain it to your father? It can't do any harm, if it does no good."

"Oh, no; I see. It can't do any harm."

"And now I'll be off," laughed Sissy. "How dreadfully I have

made you waste your time! I daresay if I hadn't been here, you would have written ever so many things on parchment, and tied them up with red tape."

"Oh yes, quantities!" Hardwicke replied, as he escorted her to the door. "A cart-load at least. I'm glad you think I'm so industrious."

Standing outside, he said something about her horse. He did not like Firefly's look, and he told her so. Moreover he threatened to tell Mrs. Middleton his bad opinion of Sissy's favourite.

"Nonsense!" she answered, lightly. "There's nothing to be afraid of." But suddenly she turned and looked at him. "Don't you really think Firefly is safe?" she said. "Well, I must see about it. William, I'm not going back now, and I think I'll walk to Mrs. Elliott's. You had better meet me here at half-past two."

And with a parting glance at Hardwicke, she went away down the sunshiny street, and he stood looking after her. He would have liked to be her escort to the Elliotts' house, but he had her message to deliver to his father, and he knew she would not permit it. Besides, to tell the truth, she had taken him by surprise, and gone away before he thought of anything of the kind. So he could only stand bareheaded on the office steps, watching her as she went on her way. But suddenly his lips parted to let out a word, which certainly would not have escaped him had he been by Sissy's side.

"There's that Fothergill fellow!" said Henry, recognising the Captain's slim figure, and black moustache. And he turned on his heel and went in.

He was quite right. It was Fothergill who came sauntering along the pavement, looking at the shop windows, at the passers-by, at the preparations for the market, with quick eyes and an interest which conveyed the impression of his superiority to it all, better than any affectation of languid indifference. His glances seemed to say, "And this is a country town—a market—these are farmers—people live here all their lives!" But when he saw Sissy Langton he came forward eagerly. And perhaps it was just as well that he was at hand to be her squire through the busy little street, for the girl was seized with a new and unaccountable nervousness. A bit of orange-peel, lying in the road, caused her a sudden tremor. Two or three meek and wondering cows, which gazed vacantly round in search of their familiar pasture, appeared to her as a herd of savage brutes. She looked distrustfully up and down the road, and waited at the pavement's edge for a donkey-cart to pass, before she dared attempt a crossing. It was just at this moment that the Captain appeared, quickening his pace, and lifting his hat; only too ready to guard her through all the perils of a Fordborough market-day.

Henry Hardwicke hated reading, and had no particular love for the law. His father said he was a fool, and was inordinately fond of him,

nevertheless. It might be that the old lawyer was right on both points. And, dull as Henry was supposed to be, he was capable of delicate feelings and perceptions, as far as Sissy Langton was concerned. It seemed to him that accident had revealed to him a hidden wound in her heart; and the revelation pained him, not selfishly, for he had never hoped for himself, but because of the secret suffering which it implied. His one idea was to do her bidding, yet not betray her. He delivered her message to his father, with a tact of which he was himself unconscious. On his lips it became no less urgent, but he dwelt especially on Sissy's desire to see justice done to the man who had been accidentally disinherited; on her feeling that she owed more to the Thornes, whose home and love she had shared, than to the Langtons, with whom she shared nothing but a name; and on her impatience of even an hour's delay, because the Squire's sudden death had made a deep impression on her mind.

All this, translated into Harry's blunt and simple speech, was intelligible enough to Mr. Hardwicke. The girlish whim that all should be done on her birthday made him smile; but the remembrance of Godfrey Thorne was present in his mind as in hers. He did not attach much importance to the whole affair, and felt that he should not be overwhelmed with surprise should he hear a few months later that Sissy was going to be married to some one else, and wanted to make some compromise—perhaps to resign the Squire's legacy to Percival. To his eyes it looked more like an attempt at restitution than anything else. "She is sorry for him, poor fellow," thought Hardwicke. "She did not know her own mind, and now she would like to atone to him somehow."

Sissy came back, alone, at the time she had fixed, looking white and anxious. A client came out as she arrived, and five farmers were waiting in the office to see Mr. Hardwicke; therefore, though she was ushered in at once, the interview was brief. The old lawyer paid her a smiling compliment on her promptitude. "We have to advise people to make their wills sometimes," he said, "but you are beforehand with us." Sissy expressed a fear that she had troubled him on a very busy day, and he assured her that, to blame her, because her twenty-first birthday happened to fall on a Friday, would be the last thing he should think of doing. Then the girl looked up at him, and said that old Mr. Thorne had always been so good to her, and she thought that perhaps, if he could see, he would be glad—so she could not put it off—she stopped abruptly, and her eyes filled. Mr. Hardwicke bent his head in silent acquiescence; the brief document was duly signed and witnessed; and Sissy went away, riding home as if she had never known what fear meant. Suppose Firefly threw her, what then? She had been to Mr. Hardwicke, and though her "Cecilia Jane Langton" was not all she could have wished, because she was nervous, and Mr. Hardwicke's pen was so scratchy, still there it was. And was not the paper, thus signed, a talisman against all dread of death?

So her burden was lighter. But what could lighten the other load which lay on her heart? She hardly knew whether it were love or fear that she felt for Percival. The long days which had passed since she saw him, had only deepened the impression of that summer evening when they parted. His reply to her entreaty that he would come back to her had been exactly what she had feared—as gentle as he himself had been when they stood face to face in the old drawing-room at Brackenhill, and as inflexible. If she could forget him—if she could learn to care for Walter Latimer or Captain Fothergill—what a bright, easy, sunshiny life might yet be hers! No—ten thousand times, No! Better to suffer the weariness of dread, and doubt, and longing for Percival.

But Percival would have been astonished if he could have seen the darkly heroic guise in which he reigned over Sissy Langton's dreams.

SHE WAS ASLEEP.

THE

CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

SEPTEMBER, 1878.

"For Percival."

CHAPTER XLII.

Walking to St. Sylvester's.

BERTIE LISLE was sorely driven and perplexed, for a few days after his triumphant performance on the organ. His letter was not a failure, but further persuasion was required to make his success complete; and during the brief interval he was persecuted by Gordon's brother.

Mr. William Gordon, when amiable and flattering, had an air of rough and hearty friendliness which was very well, as long as you held him in check. But when, though still amiable, he thought he might begin to take liberties, it was not so well. He was hard, coarse-tongued, and humorous. And when Mr. William Gordon had the upper hand, he showed himself in his true colours, as a bully and a blackguard. Bertie Lisle, not yet two-and-twenty, was no match for this man of thirty-five. He owed him money—no great sum—but more than he could pay. Now that matters had come to this pass, Lisle was heartily

ashamed of himself, his debts, and his associates; but the more shame he felt, the more anxious he was that nothing should be known. He had sought the society of these men because he had wearied of the restraints of his home life. Judith checked and controlled him unconsciously, through her very guilelessness. He might have had his liberty in a moment had he chosen, but the assertion of his right would have involved explanations and questions, and Bertie hated scenes. He found it easier to coax Lydia than to face Judith.

But this state of affairs could not go on. Bertie had once fancied that he saw a possible way out of his difficulties, and had hinted to Gordon, with an air of mystery, that though he could not pay at once, he thought he might soon be in a position to pay all. If he hoped to silence his creditors for awhile with this vague promise, he was mistaken. Gordon continually reminded him of it. He had not cared to inquire into the source of the coming wealth, but if Lisle meant to rob somebody's till, or forge Mr. Clifton's name to a cheque, no doubt Gordon thought he might as well do it, and get it over. If you are going to take a plunge, what, in the name of common sense, is the good of standing shivering on the brink?

Unluckily, Lisle's idea presented difficulties on closer inspection. But as he had gone so far that it was his only hope, he made up his mind to risk all. He saw but one possible way of carrying out his scheme. It was exactly the way which no cautious man would ever have dreamed of taking, and therefore it suited the daring inexperience of the boy. Therefore, also, it was precisely what no one would dream of guarding against. In fact, Bertie was driven, by stress of circumstances, into a stroke of genius. He took his leap, and entered on a period of suspense, anxiety, and sustained excitement, which had a wild exhilaration and sense of recklessness in it. He suffered much from a strong desire to burst into fits of unseasonable laughter. His nerves were so tensely strung that it might have been expected he would be irritable, and so he was sometimes; but never with Judith.

Thorne listened, night after night, for the man with the latch-key; but he listened in vain. He was only partly reassured, for he feared that matters were not going on well at St. Sylvester's. Indeed, he knew they were not, for Bertie had strolled into his room one day, with a face like a thundercloud. The young fellow was out of temper, and perhaps a little off his guard in consequence. When Gordon amused himself by baiting him, Lisle was forced to keep silence; but in this case it was possible, if not quite prudent, to allow himself the relief of speech.

"What is the matter?" said Percival, looking up from his book.

Bertie, who had turned his back on him, stood looking out of the window, and tapping a tune on the pane. "What's the matter?" he repeated. "Clifton has taken it into his stupid head to lecture me about some rubbish he has heard somewhere. Why doesn't some one lock him up in an idiot asylum? The meddling fool!"

"If that is qualification enough"—Thorne began, mildly, but Bertie raged on.

"What business is it of his? I'm not going to stand his impudence, as I'll precious soon let him know. A likely story! He didn't buy me body and soul for his paltry salary, though he seems to think it! The old humbug in a cassock! It's a great deal of preaching and very little practice with him, *I* know."

(He knew nothing of the kind. Mr. Clifton was a well-meaning man, who had never disturbed his mind by analysing his own opinions nor anyone else's, and who worked conscientiously in his parish. But no doubt Bertie had too much respect for truth to let it be mixed up with a fit of ill-temper.)

"Take care what you are about," said Percival, as he turned a leaf. He looked absently at the next page. "I don't want to interfere with you——"

"Oh, *you*; that's different," said Lisle, without looking round. "Not that I should recommend even you——"

"Don't finish—I hope the caution isn't needed. Of course you will do as you think best. You are your own master, but I know you'll not forget that it is a question of your sister's bread as well as your own. That's all. If you can do better for her——"

Bertie half smiled, but still he looked out of the window, and he did not speak. Presently the fretful tapping on the pane ceased, and he began to whistle the same tune very pleasantly. At last, after some time, the tune stopped altogether.

"I believe I'm a fool," said Lisle. "After all, what harm can Clifton do to me? And, as you say, it would be a pity to make Judith uneasy. Bless the stupid prig, he shall lecture me again to-morrow if he likes! He hasn't broken any bones this time, and I daresay he won't the next." The young fellow came lounging across the room, with his hands in his pockets, as he spoke. "I suppose he has gone on preaching till it's his second nature. Talk of the girl in the fairy tale, dropping toads and things from her lips—why, she was a trifle to old Clifton! I do think he can't open his mouth without letting a sermon run out!"

Thorne was relieved at the turn Bertie's meditations had taken, but he could not think that the young fellow's position at St. Sylvester's was very secure. Neither did Judith. Neither did Bertie himself. The thought did not trouble him, but Judith was evidently anxious.

"You do too much," said Percival one day to her. They were walking to St. Sylvester's, and Bertie had run back for some music which had been forgotten.

"Perhaps," said Judith simply. "But it can't be helped."

"What, are they all so busy at Standon Square?"

"Well, the holidays being so near make more work—and give one the strength to get through it."

"I'm not so sure of that. I'm afraid Miss Crawford leaves too much to you, and you will break down."

"I'm more afraid Miss Crawford will break down. Poor old lady, it goes to my heart to see her. She tries so hard not to see that she is past work—and she is!"

"Is she so old? I didn't know——"

"She was a governess till she was quite middle-aged, and then she had contrived to scrape together enough to open this school. My mother was her first pupil, and the best and dearest of all, she says. She had a terribly uphill time to begin with, and even now it is no very great success. Though she might do very well, poor thing, if they would only let her alone!"

"And who will not let her alone?"

"Oh, there are a swarm of hungry relations, who quarrel over every halfpenny she makes, and she is so good! But you can understand why she is anxious not to think that her harvest time is over."

"Poor old lady!" said Percival. "And her strength is failing?"

Judith nodded. "She does her best, but it makes my heart ache to see her. She comes down in the morning, trying to look so bright and young, in a smart cap and ribbons—I feel as if I could cry when I see that cap, and her poor shaky hands going up to it to put it straight." There were tears in the girl's voice as she spoke. "And her writing! It is always the bad paper, or the bad pen, or the day is darker than any day ever was before!"

"Does she believe all that?" the young man asked.

"I hardly know. I think she never has opened her eyes to the truth, but I suspect she feels that she is keeping them shut. It is just that trying not to see, which is so pathetic, somehow. I find all manner of little excuses for doing the writing, or whatever it may happen to be, instead of her, and then I see her looking at me as if she half doubted me."

"Does the school fall off at all?"

"I'm not sure. Schools fluctuate, you know, and it seems they had scarlet fever about six months ago. That might account for a slight decrease in the numbers—don't you think so?"

"Oh, certainly!" said Percival, with as much confidence as if boarding-school statistics had been the one study of his life. "No doubt of it."

They walked a few paces in silence, and then Judith said, "Perhaps she will be better after the holidays. I think she is very tired, she is so terribly drowsy. She drops asleep directly she sits down, and is quite sure she has been awake all the time. I'm so afraid the girls may take advantage of it some day."

"But, even for Miss Crawford's sake, you must not do too much," urged Percival.

"I will try not. But it is such a comfort to me to be able to help

her. If it were not for that, I sometimes question whether I did wisely in coming here at all."

"If it is not an impertinent question—though I rather think it is—what should you have done if you had not come?"

"I should have stayed with an aunt of mine. She wanted me, but she would not help Bertie, and I fancied that I could be of use to him. But I doubt if I can do him much good, and, if I lost my situation, I should only be a burden to him."

"Perhaps that might do him more good than anything," Percival suggested. "He might rise to the occasion, and take life in earnest, which is just what he wants, isn't it? For any one can see how fond he is of you."

"He's a dear boy," Judith answered with a smile, and looked over her shoulder. The dear boy was not in sight.

"Plenty of time," said Percival. "But it is rather a long way for him, so often as he has to go to St. Sylvester's."

"He doesn't mind that. He says he can do it in less than ten minutes, only to-day he had to go back, you see."

"It isn't so far as it would be to St. Andrew's," Thorne went on. "By the way, have you ever been to your parish church?"

"Never. I don't think your description was very inviting."

"Oh, but it would be worth while to go once. The first time I went I thought it was like a quaint, melancholy dream. Such a dim, hollow, dusty old building, and little cherubs, with grimy little marble faces, looking down from the walls. When the congregation began to shuffle in, each new comer was more decrepit and withered than the last, till I looked to see if they could really be coming through the door-way from the outer world, or whether the vaults were open, and they were the ghosts of some dead and gone congregation of long ago. And when I looked round again, there was the clergyman, in a dingy surplice, as if he had risen like a spectre in his place. He stared at us all with his dull old eyes, and turned the leaves of a great book. And all at once he began to read, in a piping voice, so thin and weak, that it sounded just like the echo of some former service, as if it had been lost in the dusty corners, and was coming back in a broken, fragmentary way. It was all the more like an echo, because the old clerk is very deaf, and he begins in a haphazard fashion, when he thinks it is time for the other to have done. So sometimes there is a long pause, and then you have their two old voices mixed up together, like an echo when it grows confused. It is very strange—gives one all manner of quaint fancies. You should go once. Nothing could be more utterly unlike St. Sylvester's."

"I think I will go," said Judith. "I know a church something like that, only not quite so dead. There is a queer old clerk there, too."

"Where is that?"

"Oh, it isn't anywhere near here. A little, old-fashioned, country town—Rookleigh."

Percival turned eagerly. "Where did you say? *Rookleigh?*"

"Yes. Why, do you know anything of it?"

"Tell me what you know of it."

"My aunt, Miss Lisle, lives there. The aunt I was telling you about, who wanted me to stay with her."

"And you were there last summer?"

"Yes. In fact I was there on a visit when I heard that—that our home was broken up. I stayed on for some time, I had nowhere to go."

"Miss Lisle lives in a red house by the river-side," said Percival, prompted by a sudden impulse.

It was Judith's turn to look surprised. "Yes, she does. But, Mr. Thorne, how do you know?"

"The garden slopes to the water's edge," he went on, not heeding her. "And there is a wide gravel path, down the middle, cutting it exactly in two. It is all very neat—it is wonderfully neat, and Miss Lisle comes down the path, looking right and left, to see whether all the carnations and the chrysanthemum plants are tied up properly, and whether there are any snails."

"Mr. Thorne, who told you——? No, you must have seen."

"But you didn't walk with her. There was a cross path behind some evergreens——"

"Yes," said Judith, "I hated to be seen then. I couldn't go beyond the garden, and I used to walk backwards and forwards there, so many times to a mile. I forget how many now. But, Mr. Thorne, tell me, how do you know all this?"

"It is simple enough," he said. "I was at Rookleigh one day, and I strolled along the path by the river. You can see the house from the further side. I stood and looked at it."

"Yes—but how did you know whose house it was?"

"I hadn't the least idea. But it took my fancy, why I don't know. And while I was looking I saw that some one came and went behind the evergreens."

"Then it was only a guess when you began to describe it?"

"Well, I suppose so. It must have been, mustn't it?" he said, looking curiously at her. "But it felt like a certainty."

They were just at St. Sylvester's, and Bertie ran up, panting, waving his music. "Lucky I've not got to sing," said the young fellow in a jerky voice, and rushed to the vestry door, where Mr. Clifton fidgeted, watch in hand. After such a race it was natural enough that the young organist should be somewhat flushed, as he went up the aisle, with a surpliced boy at his heels. But Judith had not hurried, had rather lingered, looking back. What was the meaning of that soft rosy glow upon her cheeks? And why was Thorne so absent, standing up, and sitting down, mechanically, till the service was half over before he knew it?

He was recalling that day at Rookleigh, the red houses by the water-

side, the poplars, the pigeons, the old church, the sleepy streets, the hot blue sky, the grey glitter of the river through the boughs, and the girl half seen behind the evergreens. She had been to him like a fair faint figure in a dream, and the airy fancies, that clustered round her, had been more dreamy yet. But suddenly the dream girl had stepped out of the clouds into every day life, and stood in flesh and blood beside him. And the nameless fascination with which his imagination had played, was revealed as the self-same attraction as that which his soul had known, when, years before, he first met Judith Lisle.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Faint Heart wins Fair Lady.

Percival Thorne would have readily declared that it was a matter of utter indifference to him, whether his landlady went, at the end of March, to pay a three-weeks' visit to her eldest sister, or whether she stayed at home. He took very little notice when Mrs. Bryant told him of her intention. She talked for some time. When she was gone, Thorne found himself left with the impression, that the lady in question was a Mrs. Smith, residing somewhere in Bethnal Green; that some one was a plumber and glazier; that some one had had the measles; that trade was not all one could wish; nor were Mrs. Bryant's relations quite what they should have been; but that, she thanked goodness, they were not all alike. This struck him as a reasonable cause for thankfulness, as otherwise there would certainly have been a terrible monotony in the family circle. He also had an idea that Mrs. Smith had received a great deal of good advice on the subject of her marriage, and he rather thought that Smith was not the sort of man to make a woman happy. "Either Smith isn't—or Bryant wasn't when he was alive—now which was it?" smiled Percival to himself, ruffling his wavy hair, and leaning back in his chair, with a confused sense of relief. And then the dispute about the grandmother's crockery came in, and the uncle who had a bit of money, and married the widow at Margate. "I hope to goodness Mrs. Bryant will stay away some time, if she has half as much to say on her return."

The good woman had not gone into Mr. Thorne's room for the purpose of giving him all this information. It had come naturally to her lips when she found herself there, but she merely wished to suggest to him that Lydia would be busy while she was away, and money matters were terribly muddling, weren't they?—and perhaps it would make it easier if Mr. Thorne's bill stood over—— Percival understood in a moment. The careworn face, the confused manner, told him all. Lydia would probably waste the money, and the old lady, though with per-

ceptible hesitation, had decided to trust him rather than her daughter. It was so. Lydia considered that her mother was stingy, and that finery was indispensable while she was husband-hunting.

"You see, there'll be one less to feed, and it would only bother her, and you've always been so regular with your money,"—said Mrs. Bryant, wistfully.

"Oh, I see, perfectly," Thorne replied. "I won't trouble Miss Bryant about it. It shall be all ready for you when you come back, of course. A pleasant journey to you."

The old lady went off, not without anxiety, but very favourably impressed with Percival's lofty manner. And he thought no more about it. But the time came when he wished that Mrs. Bryant had never thought of visiting Mrs. Smith of Bethnal Green at all.

Easter fell very late that year, far on in April, and it seemed to Judith that the holidays would never come. At last, however, they were within a week of the breaking-up day. It was Sunday, and she could say to herself, "Next Thursday I shall be free."

Bertie and she had just breakfasted, and he was leaning in his favourite attitude against the chimneypiece. She had taxed him with looking ill, but he had smilingly declared that there was nothing amiss with him.

"Do you sleep well, Bertie?" she asked wistfully.

"Pretty well. Not very much last night, by the way. But you are whiter than I am—look at yourself in the glass. Even if you deduct the green——"

Judith gazed into the verdant depths. "I don't know how much to allow," she said thoughtfully. "By the way, Bertie, I'm not going with you to St. Sylvester's this morning."

"All right," said Bertie.

"I have a fancy to go to St. Andrew's for once," said Judith, arranging the ribbon at her throat as she spoke. "Just for a change. You don't mind, do you?"

"Mind—no!" said Bertie, but something in his voice caused her to look round. He was as pale as death, grasping the chimneypiece with one hand, while the other was pressed upon his heart.

"Bertie! You *are* ill! Lean on me." The little sofa was close by and she helped him to it, and ran for eau-de-Cologne. When she came back he was lying with his head thrown back, white, and still, yet looking more like himself than in that first ghastly moment. Presently the blood came back to cheek and lip, and he looked up and smiled. "You are better?" she said anxiously.

"Oh yes! I'm better. I'm all right. Can't think what made me make such a fool of myself."

"No—don't get up. Lie still a little longer," said Judith, standing over him, with the wicker flask in her hand. "Oh, how you frightened me!"

"Don't pour any more of that stuff over me," he answered, languidly. "You must have expended quarts. I can feel little rivulets of it creep-creeping at the roots of my hair."

"But, Bertie, what was the matter with you?"

"I hardly know. It's all over now. My heart seemed to stop beating just for a moment. I wonder if it did, really? Or should I have died? Do sit down, Judith. You look as if you were going to faint too."

She sat down by him. After a minute Bertie's slim, long fingers groped restlessly, and she held them in a tender grasp. So for some time they remained hand in hand. Judith watched him furtively, as he lay with closed eyes, his fair boyish face pressed on the dingy cushion, and a great tenderness lighted her quiet glance. Suddenly Bertie's eyes opened, and met hers. She answered his look of inquiry.

"You are all I have, dear. We two are alone, are we not? I must be anxious if you are ill."

He pressed her hand, but he turned his face a little away, conscious at the same moment of a flush of self-reproach, and of a lurking smile. "Don't!" he said. "I'm not ill. I'm all right now—never better. Isn't it time for me to be off? I say, my dear girl, if you don't look sharp, you'll be late at St. Andrew's."

"St. Andrew's!" she repeated scornfully. "*I* go to St. Andrew's *now*, and think all the service through that my bad boy may be fainting at St. Sylvester's! No, no; I shall go with you."

"Thank you," said Bertie, sitting up, and running his fingers through his hair, by way of preparation for church. "I shall be glad, if you don't mind."

"That is," she went on, "if you are fit to go at all."

"Oh yes. I couldn't leave old Clifton in the lurch, for anything short of sudden death, and even then he'd feel himself ill-used. Stay at home because I felt faint! It would be as much as my place is worth," said Bertie, with a smile, of which Judith could not understand the fine irony.

"I'll go and get ready," she said. But she went to the door of Percival's sitting-room and knocked.

"Come in," he answered, and she opened it. He was stooping over his fire, poker in hand. She paused on the threshold, and, after breaking a hard lump of coal, he looked over his shoulder. "Miss Lisle! I beg your pardon. I thought they had come for the breakfast things."

"Oh!" she said, in a slightly disappointed tone. "You are not going to church to-day." For Thorne was more picturesquely careless in his apparel than is the wont of the British church-goer.

A rapid change of mind enabled him to answer truthfully, "Yes, I am. I ought to get ready, I suppose. Did you want me for anything, Miss Lisle?"

"Were you going to St. Sylvester's, or not?"

Percival had known by her tone that she wanted him to go to church. But he did not know which church claimed his attendance, so he answered cautiously, "Oh, I hardly know. I think I should like some one to make up my mind for me. Are you going with your brother?"

"Yes," said Judith. "He isn't very well to-day. I was rather frightened by his fainting just now."

"Of course I'll go with you," said Percival. "I'll be ready in two minutes. Been fainting? Is he better now?"

"Much better. Will you really?" And Judith vanished.

Percival was perhaps a little longer than the time he had named, but he soon came out in a very different character from that of the young man who had lounged over his late breakfast, in his shabby coat. He looked anxiously at young Lisle as they started, but Bertie's appearance was hardly such as to call for immediate alarm. He seemed well enough, Percival thought, though perhaps a little excited. In truth, there was not much amiss with him. He had got over the uneasy sense of self-reproach; the sudden shock which had caused his dismay was past, and as he went his way, solemnly escorted by his loving sister and his devoted friend, he was suffering much more from suppressed laughter than from anything else. Everything was a joke, and the narrowness of his escape that morning was a greater joke than all. "By Jove! what a laugh we will have over it, one of these days!" thought Lisle, as he put on his surplice.

Loving eyes followed him as he went to his place, and his name was fondly breathed in loving prayers.

CHAPTER XLIV.

The Last Music Lesson.

On the Tuesday morning Bertie was late for breakfast, and came in yawning rather ostentatiously. Judith protested good-humouredly. "Lie in bed late, *or* yawn, but you can't want to do both. Why, it is eleven hours since you went up to bed." This was perfectly true, but not so much to the point as she supposed.

Ever since the mysterious fainting fit, Judith had watched him with tender anxiety, and it seemed to her that there was something strange in his manner that morning. She did not know what it was, but had she held any clue to his thoughts, she would have perceived that Bertie was astonished and bewildered. He looked as if a dream had suddenly become a reality, as if a jest had turned into marvellous earnest. He smoked his pipe, leaning by the open window, with a serious, and almost awe-struck expression in his eyes. One might have fancied that he was transformed, visibly to himself, and was perplexed to find that the

change was invisible to others. Judith could not understand this quiet gravity.

She came up to him, and laid her hand caressingly on his shoulder. He did not turn, but pointed with the stem of his pipe across the street.

"Look," he said. "There's a bit of houseleek on those tiles. I never saw it till to-day."

"Nor I."

"It looks green and pleasant," said Bertie in a gentle meditative voice. "I like it."

"Our summer garden," Judith suggested.

"I wonder if there's any houseleek on our roof," he went on after a moment.

"We will hope so, for our neighbours' sake," said his sister. "It's a new idea to me. I thought our roof was nothing but tiles and cats—principally cats."

Bertie smoked his pipe, and surveyed the houseleek as if it were a newly discovered star. Everything was strange and wonderful that morning. Vague ideas floated in the atmosphere, half seen against the background of common things. The mood, born of exceptional circumstances, was unique in his life. Had it been habitual, there would have been hope of a new poet, or, since his taste lay in the direction of wordless harmony, of a great musician.

"You won't be late at the Square, Bertie dear? said Judith.

"No. I'll not be late," he answered absently. He felt that the pale gold of the April sunlight was beautiful even in Bellevue Street.

"The last lesson," she said. Bertie, suddenly roused, looked round at her with startled eyes. "What! had you forgotten that the girls go home to-morrow?" cried Judith in great surprise. She had counted the days so often.

He laughed, shortly and uneasily, "I suppose I had. Queer, wasn't it? Yes, it's my last lesson, as you say. If I had only thought of it I might have composed a Lament, taught it to all my pupils, and charged a fancy price for it in the bill."

"That would have been very touching. A little tiresome to you, perhaps, and to Miss Crawford——"

"Bless you! She's always asleep," said Bertie, knocking the ashes out of his pipe, and pocketing it. I might teach them the Old Hundredth, one after the other, all the morning through. She wouldn't know. So your work ends to-morrow?"

"Not quite. The girls go to-morrow, but I have promised to be at the Square on Thursday. There's a good deal to be done, and I should like to see Miss Crawford safely off in the afternoon."

"Where's the old woman going?"

"To Cromer for a few days. She lived there as a child, and loves it more than any place in the world."

"Does the poor old lady think she'll grow young again there?" said Bertie. "Well, perhaps she will," he added after a pause. "At any rate she may forget that she has grown old."

Punctually at the appointed hour, the young music-master arrived in Standon Square. It was for the last time, as Judith had said. Miss Crawford looked older, and Miss Crawford's cap looked newer, than either had ever done before. She put her weak little hand into Bertie's, and said some prim, kindly words, about the satisfaction his lessons had given, the progress his pupils had made, and the confidence she felt in his sister and himself. As she spoke she was sure he was gratified, for the colour mounted to his face. Suddenly she stopped in the midst of her neatly worded sentences. "You are like your mother, Mr. Lisle," she said; "I never saw it so much before." And she murmured something, half to herself, about her first pupil, the dearest of them all. Bertie, for once in his life, was silent and bashful.

The old lady rang the bell, and requested that Miss Macdonald might be told that it was time for her lesson, and that Mr. Lisle had arrived During the brief interval that ensued, the music-master looked furtively round the room, as if he had never seen it before. It seemed to him almost as if he looked at it with different eyes, and read Miss Crawford's life in it. It was a prim, light-coloured drawing-room, adorned with many trifles, which were interesting as indications of patience, and curious in point of taste. There was a great deal of worsted work, and still more crochet. Everything that could possibly stand on a mat, stood on a mat, and other mats lay disconsolately about, waiting, as cabmen wait for a fare. Every piece of furniture was carefully arranged, with a view to supporting the greatest possible number of antimacassars. There were water-colour paintings on the walls, and bouquets of wax flowers bloomed gaily under glass shades on every table. There were screens, cushions, pen-wipers. Bertie calculated that Miss Crawford's drawing-room might yield several quarts of beads. He had seen all these things many times, but they had acquired a new meaning and interest that day.

Miss Macdonald appeared, and Miss Crawford seated herself on a pink rose, about the size of a Jersey cabbage, with two colossal buds, and rested her tired back against a similar group. At the first notes of the piano her watchful and smiling face relaxed, and she nodded wearily in the background. It did not matter much. The young master was grave, silent, patient, conscientious. In fact it did not matter at all. Having slept through the earlier lessons, the schoolmistress might well sleep through this. It was rather a pity, that instead of taking a placid and unbroken rest on the sofa, she sat stiffly on a worked chair, and started into uneasy wakefulness between each lesson, dismissing one girl and sending for the next with infinite politeness and propriety. At last she said, "And will you have the kindness to tell Miss Nash?"

Bertie sat, turning over a piece of music, till the sound of the opening

door told him that his pupil had arrived. Then he rose and looked in her direction, but avoided her eyes.

There was no schoolgirl slovenliness about Emmeline Nash. Her grey dress was fresh and neat, a tiny bunch of spring flowers was fastened in it, a ribbon of delicate blue was round her neck. As she came forward with a slight flush on her cheek, her head carried defiantly, and the sunlight shining on her pale hair, Miss Crawford said to herself that really she was a stylish girl, ladylike and pretty. Her schoolfellows declared that Emmeline always went about with her mouth hanging open. But that day the parted lips had an innocent expression of wonder and expectation.

The lesson was begun in as business like a fashion as the others. Perhaps Emmeline regaled the young master with a few more false notes than usual, but she was curiously intent on the page before her. Presently she stole a glance over her shoulder at Miss Crawford. She was asleep. Emmeline played a few bars mechanically, and then she turned to Bertie.

The eyes which met her own had an anxious, tender, almost reverential expression. This slim fair girl had suddenly become a very wonderful being to Lisle, and he touched her hand with delicate respect, and looked strangely at her pretty vacant face.

Had there been the usual laughter lurking in his glance, Emmeline would have giggled. Her nerves were tensely strung, and giggling was her sole expression for a wide range of emotion. But his gravity astonished her so much that she looked at the page before her again, and went on playing with her mouth open.

Towards the close of the lesson, master and pupil exchanged a few whispered words. "You may rely on me," said Bertie finally; "what did I promise this morning?" He spoke cautiously, watching Miss Crawford. She moved in her light slumber and uttered an inarticulate sound. The young people started asunder, and blushed a guilty red. Emmeline, with an unfounded assumption of presence of mind, began to play a variation, containing such loud and agitated discords, that further slumber must have been miraculous. But Lisle interposed, "Gently," he said. "Let me show you how that should be played." And he lulled the sleeper with the tenderest harmony.

In due time the lesson came to an end. Miss Crawford presided over the farewell, and regretted that it was really Miss Nash's last lesson, as (though Mr. Lisle perhaps was not aware of it) she was not coming back to Standon Square. Mr. Lisle in his turn expressed much regret, and said that he should miss his pupil. "You must on no account forget to practise every day," said the old lady, turning to Emmeline. "Must she, Mr. Lisle?"

Mr. Lisle hoped that Miss Nash would devote at least three hours every day to her music. The falsehood was so audacious that he shuddered as he uttered it. He made a ceremonious bow, and fled.

Going back to Bellevue Street he locked himself into his room, and turned out all his worldly goods. A little portmanteau was carefully packed with a selection from them, and hidden away in a cupboard, and the rest were laid by as nearly as possible in their accustomed order. Then he took out his purse, and examined its contents with dissatisfied eyes.

"Can't get on without the sinews of war," Bertie soliloquised. "I might manage with double as much perhaps, but how shall I get it? Spoiling the Egyptians would be the Scriptural course of conduct, I suppose, and I'm ready—but where are the Egyptians? I wonder if Judith keeps a hoard anywhere. Or Lydia—shall I go and ask her to lend me jewels of silver and jewels of gold? Poor Lydia, I fear I could hardly find a plausible excuse for borrowing the blue earrings. And I doubt they wouldn't help me much. No, I must find some better plan than that."

He was intensely excited, his flushed cheek and glittering eyes betrayed it. But the feelings of the morning had worn off in the practical work of packing and preparing for his flight. Perhaps it was as well they had, for they could hardly have survived an interview with Lydia in the afternoon. She was suspicious, and required coaxing to begin with.

"Why, what's the matter, Lydia?" said Lisle at last in his gentlest voice. "You might do this for me."

"You're always wanting something done for you."

"Oh Lydia! and I've been such a good boy lately!"

"Too good by half," said Lydia.

"And a month ago I was always too bad. How am I to hit your precise taste in wickedness?"

"Oh, I ain't particular to a shade," said Lydia, "as you might know by my helping you to deceive Ma and your sister. But as to your goodness, I don't believe in it—so there! Don't tell me—people don't give up all at once, and go to bed at ten o'clock every night, and turn as good as all that. It's my belief you mean to bolt. What have you been doing?"

"Look here, Lydia, I've told you once and I tell you again—I want a holiday, and I'm off for two or three days by myself—can't be tied to my sister's apron-string all my life. But I'd rather not have any fuss about it, so I shall just go quietly and send her a line when I've started. I want you to get that portmanteau off, so that I may pick it up at the station to-morrow morning. I *did* think I might count on *you*," said Bertie with heart-rending pathos—delicately-shaded acting would have been wasted on Miss Bryant. "You've always been as true as steel. But it seems I was mistaken. Well, no matter. If my sister makes a scene about my going away, it can't be helped. Perhaps I was wrong to keep my little secrets from her and trust them to any one else."

"I don't say that," Lydia replied. "P'raps others may do as well or better by you."

"Thank you all the same for your former kindness," Bertie continued in a tone of gentle resignation, ignoring her remark. "Since you won't, there's nothing more to be said."

"What do you want to fly off in that fashion for?" said Lydia. "I'll see about your portmanteau, if this is all true——"

Bertie assumed an insulted-gentleman air. It was extremely lofty.

"Oh, if you doubt me, Miss Bryant——"

"Gracious me! You *are* touchy!" exclaimed poor Lydia in perplexity and distress. "Only one word—you haven't been doing anything bad?"

"On my honour—no," said Bertie haughtily.

"And there's nothing wrong about the portmanteau?"

"Oh, this is too much!" Lisle exclaimed. "I can't be cross-questioned in this fashion—even by *you*"—the careless parenthesis was not without effect. "Wrong about it—no! But we'll leave the subject altogether, if you please. I won't trouble you any further."

It was evident to Lydia that he was offended. There was an angry light in his eyes and his cheeks were flushed. "You *are* unkind," she said. "I'll see about it for you—and you knew I would." She saw Bertie's handsome face dimly, through a mist of gathering tears.

"Crying?" said Lisle. "Not for me, Lydia? I'm not worth it."

"That I'll be bound you are not," said the girl.

"Then why do you do it?"

"Perhaps you think we always measure our tears, and mind we don't give over-weight," said Lydia scornfully. "Shouldn't cry much at that rate, I expect! I do it because I'm a fool, if you particularly want to know."

Lisle was wondering what style of answer would be suitable and harmless, when Mr. Fordham came up the stairs. Lydia saw him, exclaimed, "Oh my good gracious!" and vanished, while Bertie strolled into his room, invoking blessings on the old man's head.

That evening there was a choir practice at St. Sylvester's. Mr. Clifton was peculiarly tiresome, and the young organist replied with an air of easy scorn, the more irritating that it was so good-humoured. Had the worthy incumbent been a shade less musical, there would have been a quarrel then and there. But how could he part with a man who played so splendidly? Bertie received his instructions as to their next meeting with an unmoved face. "It is so important now that Easter is so near," said the clergyman. "Thursday evening, and you won't be late?"

"Au revoir then," said Lisle airily, "since we are to meet so soon." And with a pleasant smile he went his way.

When he got back he found Judith at home looking worn and white. He was tenderly reproachful. "I'm sure you want your tea," he said. "You should not have thought about me." He waited on her, he busied himself about her in a dozen little ways. He was bright, gay, affectionate. A faint colour flushed her face, and a smile dawned on her lips. How

could she fail to be pleased and touched? How could she do otherwise than smile at this paragon of young brothers? He talked of holiday schemes, in a happy, though rather random, fashion. He sang snatches of songs, softly, in his pleasant tenor voice.

"Bertie, our mother used to sing that," said Judith, after one of them.

"Did she?" He paused. "I don't remember."

"No, you can't," she answered sorrowfully. "I wish you could."

"I've only the faintest and most shadowy recollection—just a dim idea of somebody," he replied. "But in my little childish troubles I always had you. I don't think I wanted any one else."

Judith took his hand in hers and held it for a moment, fondly clasped. "You can't think how much I like to hear you say that."

Lisle blushed, and was thankful for the dim light. "Do you know," he said hurriedly, "I rather think I may have a chance of giving old Clifton warning before long"

"Oh, Bertie! Where could you get anything else as good?"

"Not five and twenty miles away." Bertie named a place which they had passed on their journey to Brenthill. "Gordon of our choir told me of it this evening. I think I shall run over to-morrow, and make inquiries."

"But why would it be so much better?"

"There's a big grammar-school, and they have a chapel. I should be organist there."

"But do they pay more?" she persisted.

"Hardly as much to the organist, perhaps. But I could give lessons in the school, Gordon tells me, and make no end of money so. Oh, it would be a first-rate thing for me!"

"And for me?"

"Oh, I hope you won't have to go on slaving for Miss Crawford. You must come and keep house——" Bertie stopped abruptly. He could deceive on a grand scale, but these small fibs, which came unexpectedly, confused him, and stuck in his throat.

"Keep house for you? Is that all I am to do? Bertie, how rich do you hope to be?"

"Rich enough to keep you, very soon," he answered gravely.

"But does Mr. Gordon think you have a chance of this appointment?"

"Why not?" said Bertie. "I am fit for it." There was no arrogance in his simple statement of the fact.

"I know you are. All the same I think I won't give up my situation till we see how this new plan turns out. And I don't want to be idle."

"But I don't want you to work," said Bertie. "You are killing yourself, and you know it. Well, this is worth inquiring about, at any rate, isn't it?"

"Yes, it certainly is. It sounds very pleasant. But pray don't be rash; don't give up what you have already, until you quite see your way."

"No—but I think I do see it. I'll just take the 8.35 train to-morrow, and find out how the land lies. I can be back early in the afternoon."

So the matter was settled. As they went off to bed Lisle casually remarked that he had not seen Thorne that day. "Is he out, I wonder?"

Miss Bryant was making her nightly examination of the premises. She overheard the remark as she turned down the gas in the passage, and informed them that when Mr. Thorne came in from the office he complained of a headache, asked for a cup of tea, and went early to bed. "Poor fellow!" said Lisle. "Good-night, Miss Bryant."

Apparently Percival's headache did not keep him in bed, for a light gleamed dimly in his sitting-room late that Tuesday night.

CHAPTER XLV.

A Thunderbolt in Standon Square.

It was just one o'clock on the following Thursday, and Thorne was walking from the office to Bellevue Street. He had adopted a quicker and more business-like pace than in old days, and came down the street with long steps, his head high, and an abstracted expression on his face. Suddenly he stopped. "Miss Lisle!" he exclaimed. "Good God! What is the matter?"

It was Judith, but so pale, with fear and horror looking so terribly out of her eyes, that she was like a spectre of herself. She stopped short as he had done, and gazed blankly at him.

"Judith, what is it?" he repeated. "For God's sake, speak. What is the matter?"

He saw that she made a great effort to look like her usual self, and that she partly succeeded.

"I don't know," she answered. "Please come, Mr. Thorne, but don't say anything to me yet. Not a word, please."

In silence he offered her his arm. She took it, and they went on together. Something in Judith Lisle always appealed with peculiar force to Percival's loyalty. He piqued himself on not even looking inquiringly at his companion as they walked, but he felt her hand quivering on his arm, and his brain was busy with conjectures. "Bertie has been away the last day or two," he said to himself. "Can she have heard any bad news of him? But why is she so mysterious about it, for she is not the girl to make a needless mystery?" When they reached Bellevue Street she quitted his arm, thanked him with a look, and went upstairs. Percival followed her.

She opened the door of her sitting-room, and looked in. Then she turned to the young man who stood gravely in the background, as if awaiting her orders.

"Will you come in?" she said. But when she thought he was about to speak, she made a quick sign with her hand. "Not yet, please."

The cloth was laid, but some books and papers had been pushed to one end of the table. Judith went to them, and lifted them carefully, as if she were looking for something. Then she went to the little side-table. Then to the chimney-piece, still seeking, while Thorne stood by the window, silently waiting.

The search was evidently unavailing, and Judith rang the bell. During the pause which ensued, she rested her elbow on the back of Bertie's easy-chair, and covered her eyes with her hand. She was shaking from head to foot, but, when the door opened, she stood up and tried to speak in her usual voice.

"Are there any letters by the second post for me, Emma?"

The little maid looked wonderingly at Mr. Thorne, and then at Miss Lisle. "No, ma'am. I always bring 'em up."

"I know you do, but I thought they might have been forgotten. Will you ask Miss Bryant if she is quite sure none came for me this morning?"

There was another silence while Emma went on her errand. She came back with Miss Bryant's compliments, and no letters had come for Miss Lisle.

"Thank you," said Judith. "That will do. I will ring when I want dinner brought in."

When they were left alone, Percival stepped forward. "What is it?" he said. "You will tell me now."

She answered with averted eyes. "You know that our school broke up yesterday? Emmeline Nash went away by the nine-o'clock train, but she has never gone home!"

"Has never gone home!" Percival repeated. "That is very strange. She must have met with some accident." There was no answer. "It may not be anything serious—surely you are distressing yourself too much."

Judith looked up into his face with questioning eyes.

"Or perhaps it is some school-girl freak," Thorne went on. "Naturally, Miss Crawford must be very anxious; but don't make up your mind to the worst till you know for certain."

Still that anxious questioning look, as if she would read his very soul. Percival was startled and perplexed, and his eyes made no response. The girl turned away with a faint cry of impatience and despair.

"And I am his own sister!"

Percival stood for a moment, thunderstruck. Then "Bertie!" he said.

"But you did not think of him till I spoke," she answered, passionately. "It was my doing—mine!"

"Where is Bertie?" Thorne asked the question with something of her fear in his eyes.

"I don't know. I had that yesterday morning."

He took a pencilled scrap of paper from her hand. Bertie had written,

"I find I cannot be back this afternoon, probably not till to-morrow. Don't expect me till you see me, and don't be anxious about me. All right.—Your H.L."

"How did you get this?" he asked, turning it uneasily in his fingers.

"A boy brought it from the station, not half an hour after he went."

Percival was silent. A sudden certainty had sprung up in his mind, and it made any attempt at reassuring her little better than a lie. Yet he felt as if his certainty were altogether unfounded. He could assign no reason for it. The truth was, that Bertie himself was the reason, and Percival knew him better than he had supposed.

"Mr. Thorne," said Judith, "don't you hate me for what I've said? Surely you must. Miss Crawford doesn't dream that Bertie has anything to do with this. And you didn't, for I watched your eyes—you never would have thought of him but for me. It is I, his own sister, who have hinted it. He has nobody but me, and when his back is turned I accuse him of being so base, so cruel, so mercenary, that——" She stopped and tried to steady her voice. Suddenly she turned and pointed to the door. "And if he came in there now, this minute—oh, Bertie, my Bertie, if you *would!*—if he stood there now, I should have slandered him without a shadow of proof. Oh, it is odious, horrible! The one in all the world who should have clung to him and believed in him, and I have thought this of him! Say it is horrible, unnatural—reproach me—leave me! Oh, my God! You can't."

And in truth Percival stood mute and grave, holding the shred of paper in his hand, and making no sign through all the questioning pauses in her words. But her last appeal roused him.

"No," he said gently. "I can't reproach you. If you are the first to think this, don't I know that you will be the one to hope and pray when others give up." He took her hands in his. She suffered him to do what he would. "How should Miss Crawford think of him?" he said. "Pray God we may be mistaken, and if Bertie comes back, can we not keep silence for ever?"

"I could not look him in the face."

"Tell me all," said Thorne. "Where did he say he was going? Tell me everything. If you are calm, and if we lose no time, we may unravel this mystery, and clear Bertie altogether before any harm is done. As you say, there is no shadow of proof. Miss Nash may have

gone away alone—school-girls have silly fancies. Or perhaps some accident on the line——"

"No," said Judith.

"No? Are you sure? Sit down and tell me all."

She obeyed to the best of her ability. She told him what Bertie had said about the situation he hoped to obtain, and what little she knew about Emmeline's disappearance.

Percival listened, with a face which grew more anxious with every word.

This is what had actually happened that morning at Standon Square. Judith was busy over Miss Crawford's accounts. She remembered so well the column of figures, and the doubtful hieroglyphic which might be an 8, but was quite as likely to be a 3. While she sat gazing at it, and weighing probabilities in her mind, the housemaid appeared, with an urgent request that she would go to Miss Crawford at once. Obeying the summons, she found the old lady looking at an unopened letter which lay on the table before her.

"My dear," said the little schoolmistress, "look at this." There was a tone of hurried anxiety in her voice, and she held it out with fingers that trembled a little.

It was directed in a gentleman's hand, neat and old-fashioned—

Miss Emmeline Nash,
Care of Miss Crawford,
Montague House,
Standon Square,
Brenthill.

Judith glanced eagerly at the envelope. For a moment she had feared that it might be some folly of Bertie's addressed to one of the girls. But this was no writing of his, and she breathed again.

"To Emmeline," she said. "From some one who did not know when you broke up. Did you want me to direct it to be forwarded?"

"Forwarded—where? Do you know who wrote that letter?" By this time Miss Crawford's crisp ribbons were quivering like aspen-leaves.

"No—who? Is there anything wrong about this correspondent of Emmeline's? I thought you would forward it to her at home. Dear Miss Crawford, what is the matter?"

"That is Mr. Nash's writing—Oh, Judith, what does it mean? She went away yesterday to his house, and he writes to her here!"

The girl was taken aback for a moment, but her swift common sense came to her aid. "It means that Mr. Nash has an untrustworthy servant, who has carried his master's letter in his pocket, and posted it a day too late, rather than own his carelessness. Some directions about Emmeline's journey—open it and see."

"Ah! possibly—I never thought of that," said Miss Crawford, feeling for her glasses. "But," her fears returning in a moment, "I ought to have heard from Emmeline."

"When? She would hardly write the night she got there. You were sure not to hear this morning, you know how she puts things off. The midday post will be in directly; perhaps you'll hear then. Open the letter now, and set your mind at rest."

The envelope was torn open. "Now, you'll see he wrote it on the 18th—Good heavens! It's dated yesterday!"

"My dear Emmeline,—Since Miss Crawford wishes you to remain two days longer for this lesson you talk of, I can have no possible objection; but I wish you could have let me know a little sooner. You very thoughtfully say you will not give me the trouble of writing if I grant your request. I suppose it never occurred to you that by the time your letter reached me every arrangement had been made for your arrival—a greater trouble, which might have been avoided if you had written earlier. Neither did you give me much choice in the matter.

"But I will not find fault just when you are coming home. I took you at your word when your letter arrived yesterday, and did not write. But to-day it has occurred to me that after all you might like a line, and that Miss Crawford would be glad to know that you will be met at the end of your journey."

Compliments to the schoolmistress followed, and the signature "Henry Nash."

The two women read this epistle with intense anxiety. But while Miss Crawford was painfully deciphering it, and had only realised the terrible fact that Emmeline was lost, the girl's quicker brain had snatched its meaning at a glance. She saw the cunning scheme to secure two days of unsuspected liberty. Who had planned this? Who had so cleverly dissuaded Mr. Nash from writing? And what had the brainless, sentimental school-girl done with the time?

"Where is she?" cried Miss Crawford, clinging feebly to Judith. "Oh, has there been some accident?"

"No accident," said Judith. "Do you not see that it was planned beforehand? She never thought of staying till Friday."

"No, never. Oh, my dear, I don't seem able to understand. Don't you think perhaps my head will be clearer in a minute or two? Where can she be?"

The poor old lady looked vaguely about, as if Miss Nash might be playing hide and seek behind the furniture. Her face was veined and ghastly. She hardly comprehended the blow which was falling upon her, but she shivered hopelessly, and thought she should understand soon, and looked up at Judith with a mute appeal in her dim eyes.

"Where can she be?" The girl echoed Miss Crawford's words half to herself. "What ought we to do?"

"I can't think why she wrote and told them not to meet her on

Wednesday," said the old lady. "So timid as Emmeline always was, and she hated travelling alone. Oh, Judith! Has she run away with some one?"

A cold hand seemed to clutch Judith's heart, and her face was like marble. Bertie! Oh, no—no—no! Not her brother! This treachery could not be his work. Yet "Bertie" flashed before her eyes, as if the name were written in letters of flame on Mr. Nash's open note, on the wall, the floor, the ceiling. It swam in a fiery haze between Miss Crawford and herself.

She stood with her hands tightly clasped, and her lips compressed. It seemed to her that if she relaxed the tension of her muscles for one moment, Bertie's name would force its way out in spite of her. And even in that first dismay she was conscious that she had no ground for her belief but an unreasoning instinct, and the mere fact that Bertie was away.

"Help me, Judith!" said Miss Crawford, pitifully. She trembled as she clung to the girl's shoulder. "I'm not so young as I used to be, you know. I don't feel as if I could stand it. Oh, if only your mamma were here."

Judith answered with a sob. Miss Crawford's confession of old age went to her heart. So did that pathetic cry, which was half longing for her who had been so many years at rest, and half for Miss Crawford's own stronger and brighter self of bygone days. She put her arm round the schoolmistress, and held up the shaking, unsubstantial little figure.

"If Bertie has done this, he has killed her," said the girl to herself, even while she declared aloud, "I *will* help you, dear Miss Crawford. I will do all I can. Don't be so unhappy—it may be better than we fear." But the last words, instead of ringing clear and true, as consolation should, died faintly on her lips.

Something was done, however. Miss Crawford was put on the sofa, and had a glass of wine, while Judith sent a telegram in her name to Mr. Nash. But the poor old lady could not rest for a moment. She pulled herself up by the help of the back of the couch, and sitting there, with her ghastly face surmounted by a crushed and wobegone cap, she went over the same old questions, and doubts, and fears, again and again. Judith answered her as well as she could, and persuaded her to lie down once more. But in another moment she was up again.

"Judith—I want you! Come here! Come quite close!"

"Here I am, dear Miss Crawford. What is it?"

The old lady looked fixedly at the kneeling figure before her. "I've nobody but you, my dear," she said. "You are a little like your mamma sometimes."

"Am I?" said Judith. "So much the better. Perhaps it will make you feel as if I could help you."

"You are not like her to-day. Your eyes are so sad and strange."

Judith tried to smile. "Your brother, Mr. Herbert, is more like her. I noticed it when he was here last. She had just that bright happy look."

"I don't remember that," Judith answered. (One recollected the school-girl, and one the wife.)

"And that sweet smile—Mr. Herbert has that too. One could see how good she was. But I didn't mean to talk about that. There is something—I shan't be easy till I have told some one."

"Tell me, my dear," said Judith.

The schoolmistress looked anxiously round. "I may be mistaken—I hope I am—but, do you know, dear, I doubt I'm not quite so wakeful as I ought to be? You wouldn't notice it, of course, because it is when I am alone, or as good as alone. But sometimes—just now and then, you know—when I have been with the girls while they took their lessons from the masters, the time has seemed to go so very fast. I should really have thought they hadn't drawn a line, when the drawing-master has said, 'That will do for to-day, young ladies,' and none of them seemed surprised. And once or twice I really haven't been *quite* sure what they have been practising with Mr. Herbert. But music is so very soothing, isn't it?"

Judith held her breath in terror. And yet would it not be better if that horrible thought came to Miss Crawford too? If others attacked him, his sister might defend. Nevertheless she drew a long sigh of relief when the old lady went on, as if confessing a crime of far deeper dye.

"And in church—it isn't easy to keep awake sometimes, one has heard the service so often, and the sermons seem so very much alike. Suppose some unprincipled young man——"

"Dear Miss Crawford, no one can wonder if you are drowsy now and then. You are always so busy, it is only natural."

"But it isn't right. And," with the quick tears gathering in her eyes, "I ought to have owned it before. Only I have tried so hard to keep awake."

"I know you have." Miss Crawford drew one of her hands from Judith's clasp to find her handkerchief, and then laid her head on the girl's shoulder, and sobbed.

"If it has happened so," she said; "if it has been my carelessness that has done it, I shall never forgive myself. Never. For I can never say that I didn't suspect myself of being unfit. It will break my heart. I have been so proud to think that I had never failed any one who trusted me. And now—a poor motherless girl, who was to be my especial care, who had no one but me to care for her—oh, Judith, what has become of her?"

There was silence for a minute. How could Judith answer her?

"I can never say I didn't doubt myself; but it was only a doubt. And how could I give up with so many depending on me?"

"Wait till we know something more," Judith pleaded. "Wait till

we hear what Mr. Nash says in answer to your message. I am sure you have tried to act for the best."

"I shall never hold up my head again," said Miss Crawford, and laid it feebly down, as if she were tired out.

The telegram came. Emmeline had not been heard of, and Mr. Nash would be at Brenthill that afternoon.

Judith searched the little room which the schoolgirl had occupied, but no indication of her intention to fly was to be found. She dared not question the servants before Mr. Nash's arrival. Secrecy might be important, and there would be an end to all hope of secrecy if once suspicion were aroused.

"There's nothing to do but to wait," she said, coming down to Miss Crawford. "I think, if you don't mind, I'll go home for an hour or so."

"No, no, no! Don't go!"

"I must," said Judith. "I shall not be long."

"You will!"

"No. An hour and a half—two hours at the utmost."

"Oh, I understand!" said Miss Crawford. "You will never come back."

"Never come back? I will promise you, if you like, that I will be here again by half-past two—that is, if I go now."

"Oh, of course. I can't keep you! If you will go, you will. But I think it is very cruel of you. You will leave me to face Mr. Nash alone."

"Indeed I will not," the girl replied.

"And after all it is not half so bad for you as for me. He can't blame you. It will kill me, I think, but he can't say anything to you. Oh, Judith, I'm only a stupid old woman; but I have meant to be kind to you."

"No one could have been kinder!" said Judith. "Miss Crawford, whatever happens, believe me, I am grateful."

"Then you will stop—you will stop? He can't say anything to you, my dear."

Judith was cold with terror at the thought of what Mr. Nash might have to say to her. At the same moment she was burning with anxiety to get to Bellevue Street and find some letter from Bertie. She freed her hands gently but firmly. Miss Crawford sank back in mute despair, as if she had received her death wound.

"Listen to me," said Judith. "I *must* go, but I will come back. I would swear it—only I don't quite know how people swear," she added with a tremulous little laugh. "Dear Miss Crawford, you trusted mamma. As surely as I am her daughter you may trust me. Won't you trust me, dear?"

"I'll try," said the old lady. "But why must you go?"

"I must, really."

"It won't be so bad for you—he can't blame you," Miss Crawford

reiterated, drearily pleading. "Judith, no one ever had the heart to be so cruel as you will be if you don't come back."

"But I will," said Judith. She made her escape, and met Percival Thorne on her way to Bellevue Street.

"And now, what is to be done?" she asked, looking up at him when she had told him all. "No letter—no sign of Bertie!"

Percival might not be very ready with expedients, but his calmness and reserve gave an impression of greater resources than he actually possessed. He hesitated while Judith spoke, but he did not show it. There was a pause, during which he caught at an idea, and uttered it without a trace of indecision.

"I'll look up Gordon," he said, glancing at his watch. "If Gordon told Bertie of this situation, he may be able to tell us where a telegram would find him. Perhaps he may explain this mysterious little note. If we can satisfactorily account for his absence, we shall have nothing to say about Bertie, except to justify him if any one else should bring his name into the affair. And you could do your best to help Mr. Nash and Miss Crawford in their search."

"Yes—but where will you find Mr. Gordon?"

"He's a clerk at a factory in Hill Street. I will go at once." And he hurried off.

Judith went to the window, and looked after him with a despairing sense of loneliness in her heart. The little maid asked her if the dinner should be brought in, and she answered in a tone that she hoped was cheerful.

Miss Bryant came in with a dish, and set it on the table. She seldom helped in this way, and Judith divined the motive. Conscious that she was narrowly scanned, she tried to assume a careless air, and turned away, so that the light should not fall on her face. But Lydia said nothing. She looked at Judith doubtfully, curiously, anxiously; her lips parted, but no word came. Judith began to eat as if in defiance. Lydia hesitated on the threshold, and then went away.

"Stuck-up thing!" she exclaimed, as soon as she was safe in the passage. "But what has he been doing? Oh, I must and will know!"

Percival returned before Judith's time had expired, and came into the room with a grave face, and eyes that would not meet hers.

"Tell me," she said.

He turned away, and studied a coloured lithograph on the wall. "It wasn't true," he said. "Gordon was at the last practising, but he never said a word about this organist's situation. In fact, Bertie left before the choir separated."

"Some one else might have told him," said Judith.

There was a pause. "I fear not," said Percival, intently examining a very blue church spire in one corner of the picture. "In fact, Miss Lisle, I don't see how any one could. There is no vacancy for an organist there—no prospect of any vacancy. I ascertained that."

Another pause, a much longer one. Percival had turned away from the lithograph, but now he was looking at a threadbare place in the carpet, as thoughtfully as if he would have to pay for a new one. He touched it lightly with his foot, and perceived that it would soon wear into a hole.

"I must go back to Miss Crawford," said Judith, suddenly. He bent his head in silent acquiescence.

"What am I to tell her?" She lifted a book from the table, and laid it down again with a quivering hand. "Oh, it is too cruel!" she said, in a low voice. "No one could expect it of me. My own brother!"

"That's true. No one could expect it."

"And yet——" said Judith. "Miss Crawford—Emmeline. Oh, Mr. Thorne, tell me what I ought to do!"

"How can I? I don't know what to say. Why do you attempt to decide now? You may safely leave it till the time comes."

"Safely?"

"Yes. You will not do less than your duty."

She hesitated, having a woman's craving for something to which she might cling, something definite and settled. "It is not certain," she said, at last.

"No," he answered. "Bertie has deceived you, but it may be for some foolish scheme of his own. He may be guiltless of this—it is only a suspicion still."

"Well, I will go," said Judith again. "Oh, if only he had come home!"

"There is a choir practice to-night," said Percival. "If all is well he will be back in time for that. They have no doubt of his coming. Why not leave a note?"

She took a sheet of paper and wrote on it—

"My dearest brother"—("If he comes back he will be best and dearest," she thought, as she wrote. It had come to this, that it was necessary to justify the loving words! "If he comes back—oh, how shall I ever atone to him?")

"Come to me at once at Standon Square. Do not lose a moment, I entreat you.

"Yours always,
"JUDITH."

She folded and addressed it, and laid it where he could not fail to see it as he came in. Then, having put on her hat, she turned to go.

"Let me walk with you," said Percival. Lydia met them on the stairs, and cast a look of scornful anger on Miss Lisle. "Much she cares!" the girl muttered. "*He* doesn't come back, but she can go walking about with her young man. Those two won't miss him much."

Thorne saw his companion safely to Standon Square, and then went to the office. He was late, a thing which had never happened before, and, though he did his best to make up for lost time, he failed signally. His thoughts wandered from his work to dwell on Judith Lisle, and, if truth be confessed, on the dinner, which he had forgotten while with her. He was tired and faint. The lines seemed to swim before his eyes, and he hardly grasped the sense of what he wrote. Once he awoke from a reverie, and found himself staring blankly at an ink-spot on the dingy desk. The young clerk on his right was watching him with a look of curiosity, in which there was as much malevolence as his feeble features could express, and when Thorne met his eyes he turned away with an unpleasant smile. It seemed as if six o'clock would never come, but it struck at last, and Percival escaped, and made his way to Bellevue Street.

The Centaurs.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.

. . . στρατὸς
θαυμαστός—PINDAR.

AMONG all the fables of Greece, few are more interesting to examine than the fable of the Centaurs. The notion of such a race of twy-formed creatures was firmly rooted in the ancient mind, and not soon relinquished. Although the belief in their existence was laughed at by many free-thinkers among the ancients themselves, from the philosopher Plato to the physician Galen, it continued to hold its own through several centuries of the Christian era. St. Jerome, making a distinction between monsters which are simply fabulous and monsters which really exist, contends that both Centaurs and Sirens are real; and elsewhere, he quotes the testimony of St. Antony, who deposes that he once spoke to a live Centaur, as he journeyed through the desert on his way to visit the hermit Paul. To men who neither knew nor cared about laws of structure and anatomy, there would be nothing distasteful or absurd in the idea of such a mixture and duplication of organisms. Even to ourselves, if we can forget our science, the absurdity is not without its charm. To be part, metaphorically, of his steed, is the ambition of the rider; and to unite the two natures in one indivisible being, able to leap, gallop, and exult in swiftness like a horse, and having at the same time the erect countenance and skilful hands of man, would be to realise something like those physical illusions which visit us in dreams, when the body seems to have thrown off its natural restraints, and we feel ourselves careering through space in the exercise of miraculous and incompatible powers.

The class of conceptions to which the Centaurs belong are comparatively rare in Greek mythology. A Centaur, made up of the two most perfect of the animals in combination,* may be an excellent monster, but is a monster still; and the Greek imagination, we know, was too clear and sane to be prodigal of monstrosity. While Egypt and Asia worshipped composite divinities, half man, half hawk, dog, cat, ape, eagle, or bull, the Greek took his ideal of the highest from himself, and sacrificed to

* Quid membra immania prosunt?
Quid geminæ vires? quid, quod *fortissima rerum*
In nobis duplex natura animalia junxit?—Ovid, *Met.* xii. 501 *sqq.*

gods after his own image. In its obscure origins, indeed, it is doubtful whether his religion differed so much in this respect from the religions of his neighbours; and in its decline it tended again to assimilate itself to theirs, till in the later creeds of Alexandria, Antioch, and Rome, we are used to finding all manner of grotesque and barbarous deities confounded and identified with the Olympians. But in the good days, while Greece was really Greece, her gods, her greater gods at least, were of no double nature, but simply shapes of man or woman made perfect. Monsters, when they occur, occur always in inferior place, and with a special character and significance. Man or woman is mixed with brute in those mythological creatures which embody, not the highest, not the foreseeing and controlling forces of the universe, but only its capricious, violent, or treacherous forces, those which, though stronger and more irrepressible than man, are lower and blinder than he is. Thus the boisterousness of the earth's exuberance is incarnated in the goat-foot company of the Satyrs; the clamorousness and headlong strength of rivers, in river-gods having the faces of men but the bodies of bulls; the peril of island reefs in the Sirens; the terror of whirlpool in Scylla, of pestilence in the Sphinx, of volcano in the Chimæra, of hurricane in the Harpies. These and a number of other natural forces, being freakish or rapacious like the brutes, are personified in the symbolic likeness of brutal or demi-brutal creatures. Among such creatures, the Centaurs are those which have the most romantic history, and which occupied the foremost place in the thoughts, and more especially in the art, of Greece.

I.

The fable of the Centaurs is a fable of the highlands. Their haunts were among the fastnesses of the Thessalian and Arcadian mountains. Arcadia, however, was not their earliest home; their earliest home was Thessaly, where they ranged the forests of Mount Pelion, and from thence as far as Ossa and the gorge of Tempe, along the great eastern ridge which shuts out the plain of the Enipeus from the sea. That inland plain was from time immemorial the great horse-breeding district of the Greek world, and it was natural that, together with many another sacred and heroic legend of the race, this legend of the man-horse should spring up among the mountains which fenced it round about.

The prodigious nature of the creatures was accounted for by the prodigious circumstances of their birth. They were the children or grand-children of the murderer Ixion, who, when the gods had granted him purification, incorrigibly repaid their clemency by seeking to do violence to the queen of the gods, Hêrê. Hêrê, so ran the story, substituted for herself a cloud in her own likeness (Nephelê); and from the embrace of Ixion and the cloud was descended the monstrous progeny of the Centaurs. With the exception of Cheiron, who, as we shall see, was of a different character and parentage, the Centaurs passed with the

Greeks as the very types of reasonless lust and impulse. Homer calls them "beasts" as opposed to men—"shaggy beasts of the mountain;" Pindar, a "portentous tribe;" the Attic tragedians, a "four-legged outrageousness," a "twy-formed, indivisible, bestial cavalry, outrageous, lawless, overbearing in strength." Their weapons are huge stones and pine branches; their occupation, the hunting of hares, foxes, boars, and deer; their diet, raw flesh; and the taste or even the smell of wine makes them ungovernable. Now and again they come swooping down from their forest glades and precipices, for war or foray among the haunts of men. Their one celebrated warfare was that which they waged to their own undoing against the Lapiths, a race of rough and tough Thessalian heroes, whom the legends of the country represented as settled in the same mountainous region, beneath the slopes of Ossa and Othrys. The king of the Lapiths was Peirithoös, and this Peirithoös was the son of Ixion and his wife Dia, or, as some said, of Dia not by her husband Ixion, but by a mightier father, the god Zeus. The Centaurs and Lapiths, then, were a kind of cousins; they had already been at strife about the inheritance of their common progenitor Ixion, and had come to terms concerning that strife, when it happened that the Lapith king, Peirithoös, took to himself a bride, Hippodameia—variously named also Deidameia or Laodameia—and invited the Centaurs to the wedding feast. To the same feast was also bidden the Attic hero Theseus, the friend and companion-in-arms of Peirithoös. Milk was at first set before the savage guests, and for a while all went well; but when wine was opened they swept away the milk from the board, and seized the silver drinking-horns, and in a trice the wine played wildfire in their veins.* One of them, Eurytion, was the first to go mad with brute desire; he fell upon and seized the bride; following him all the rest of his tribe give way to the same frenzy, and break up the feast, and seize each upon a youth or maiden among the marriage guests. The Lapith heroes leap to the rescue, with Theseus foremost in the fray beside his friend; the tables are overturned, and the chargers and wine jars snatched up for weapons, and death is dealt amid the crashing of axes and brands and stakes, of wrought stones wrenched from threshold and lintel, nay, of the sacrificial altars themselves, which the combatants tear up and hurl at one another in the medley. All day long rages the fight, and according to some accounts for many days thereafter, till at last human valour prevails over brute ferocity. Theseus avenges his friend and slays the ravisher Eurytion, and the bravest of the Centaurs perish in like manner by other hands, though not before they have wrought sore havoc among their enemies. The episodes of the struggle are very variously told and represented, but one or two of them are constant, such as the drunkenness and out-

* ἀνδροδόμαντα δ' ἐπεὶ φῆρες δάεν ῥιπὰν μελιαδέος οἴνου
ἐσσυμένως ἀπὸ μὲν λευκὸν γάλα χερσὶ τραπεζᾶν
ὤθεον, αὐτόματοι δ' ἐξ ἀργυρέων κεράτων
πίνοντες ἐπλάζοντο.—Pindar, *ap. Athenæum*, xii. § 51.

rage of Eurytion, and the singular story of the Lapith hero Kaineus. Kaineus, the legend said, was a maid metamorphosed into a man—the maiden Kainis, whom the sea-god Poseidon had loved, and who in return for her love had asked and received this grace, that she might be turned into a man; to which the god had added the gift of invulnerability. Being invulnerable, Kaineus was assailed in vain by the Centaurs, until they bethought themselves of a new plan, and with one consent brought stones and boughs, and piled them on him until he was buried alive. But neither this nor other advantages of the monsters against the Lapiths could arrest their defeat, and finally they were all slain or scattered, and the few that survived driven to other fastnesses in remoter regions of the land.

This battle at the wedding feast of Peirithoös stands out through all antiquity as one of the most prodigious and far-resounding events in the heroic annals of Greece. "Mightiest of men upon the earth," says Homer, "were the Lapiths, and mightiest were the foes they fought." With the progress of reflection, their victory acquires a further symbolic significance, in so far as it represents the victory, primarily, of human over monstrous, and secondarily, of Greek over barbarian forces. The assault, with its repulse and the dispersion of the assailants, is the great collective exploit and title to remembrance of the Thessalian Centaurs.

But besides the lawless monsters who met their deserts on that day, there was another Centaur, twy-formed like those, and like those haunting the summits of Pelion, but wise, kind, and serviceable, the Centaur Cheiron. Cheiron is associated with the rest of his tribe by Homer, when he speaks of him as the "justest of the Centaurs;" still more closely by the writer of one of the pseudo-Homeric epigrams, when he cries "hither let Cheiron lead his troop of Centaurs;" and for all his righteousness, Cheiron is represented as having to share the exile of his race after their overthrow by the Lapiths. At the same time, and in order, doubtless, to account for his exceptional character, he is represented as being sprung from other parents than the rest, namely from the primeval god Kronos, and a nymph Phillyra. This name Phillyra signifies a nymph or divinity of the leaves and herbs, that is, of healing herbs or simples. The wife of Cheiron is another nymph, Chariklo, a name significative of grace, or beauty with kindness. So wived and mothered, Cheiron figures through a whole cycle of legends as the friend of man, the trainer of heroes, the teacher of hardihood and obedience, of hunter's craft, leechcraft, lute-playing, and all manner of wisdom. His home is in the Pelethronian cave, near the summit of Mount Pelion; hence he was wont to issue for the chase or for the culling of herbs along the banks of Onchestos or lake Bœbœis; hither his pupils were brought to dwell with him, and hither all the heroes of Greece came to gather counsel from his lips. The mythic founder and father of the art of medicine, Asklepios, whom later generations worshipped as a god, was in a special degree the pupil of Cheiron; so were also his sons Podaleirios and

Machaon; so were the brothers of Helen, Castor and Pollux, and the chief heroes of the Trojan war, Nestor, Ulysses, Diomed; so were Theseus, Meleager, Jason; so were the sons of Aiakos, Peleus and Telamon.

The mother of these two last, Endeïs, was represented as being the daughter of Cheiron himself by his wife Chariklo; hence Peleus was his grandson, and Achilles his great-grandson. Over these two famous heroes, the wise Centaur exercises an especial care. Once upon a time Peleus, having involuntarily slain a brother hero in the hunt of the Kalydonian bear, went from his native Phthia to Iolkos, and received purification in the house of Akastos, king of Iolkos. There Astydameia, the wife of Akastos, fell in love with the fugitive hero, and when he would none of her love, accused him as the wife of Potiphar accused Joseph. Akastos would not put to death the man he had purified, but took him out to hunt in the forest, and when they took rest from hunting, and Peleus fell asleep, Akastos took his sword away and hid it among the litter of oxen, and left him at the mercy of wild beasts. Then the Centaurs of the forest found Peleus, and came about him to slay him; but Cheiron prevented them, seeking out the sword of the hero where it was hidden, and giving it him so that he might drive off the other Centaurs. Afterwards Peleus sought the beautiful sea-goddess Thetis to wife, and Cheiron helped him in his wooing, teaching him to lay hands upon her without flinching, and not leave hold though she miraculously changed herself into a monster, a stream, and then a fire under his hands. And so Peleus prevailed over the sea-goddess, and they were wedded in the home of Cheiron, and all the gods assembled to their wedding-feast; and Cheiron brought for wedding gift, as some tell, a spear of wondrous length, strength, and weight, wrought from one of the mighty ashes of Mount Pelion,* which Achilles in after days was wont to wield against the Trojans, or, according to others, a more peaceful offering of all the flowers that the west wind brings to blossom upon Thessalian mountains or along Thessalian streams, woven together into garlands which filled the marriage chambers with their fragrance.† And when in good time Thetis bore a son to Peleus, she would fain have made the child immortal; and to this end, like the goddess Dêmêtêr with her

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* ἔγχος δ' οὐχ ἕλετ' οἷον ἀμύμονος Αἰακίδαο
βριθὺ μέγα στιβαρὸν· τὸ μὲν οὐ δύνατ' ἄλλος Ἀχαιῶν
πάλλειν, ἀλλὰ μεν οἶος ἐπίστατο πῆλαι Ἀχιλλεὺς,
Πηλιάδα μελίην, τὴν πατρὶ φίλῳ πόρε Χείρων
Πηλίου ἐκ κορυφῆς, φόνον ἔμμεναι ἡρώεσσιν.—Hom. *Il.* ix. 140 *sqq.*

† Quorum post obitum, princeps e vertice Pelii
Advenit Chiron portans silvestria dona:
Nam quotcumque ferunt campi, quos Thessala magnis
Montibus ora creat, quos propter fluminis undas
Aura parit flores tepidi fœcunda Favonî,
Hos indistinctis plexos tulit ipse corollis,
Quis permulsa domus jucun lo risit odore.
—Catullus, *Epithalam.* 281 *sqq.*

foster son at Eleusis, she anointed him daily with ambrosia, and laid him nightly in the fire, purging away his mortality. But one night Peleus kept watch, and saw the child in the fire, and cried out at the sight; and then Thetis would abide no longer with Peleus, but went back to her nymphs beneath the waves. But either she herself before her departure, or Peleus afterwards—or, as it is sometimes represented, both of them in company—took the child to the cave of Cheiron, and committed it to his care. And Cheiron nurtured the boy, and called his name Achilles, and fed him on a warrior's diet, on the entrails of lions and wild boars, and the marrow of bears, and taught him to ride, to play the lute, to know the use of herbs, to cast the javelin and run like the wind, so that at six years old he would bring back to the cave the carcases of boars and lions that he had himself run down;* and so he grew up in all valour and discipline, until his mother took him away again in his ninth year.

These two Thessalian legends, that of the multitude of savage Centaurs and their overthrow by the Lapiths, and of the one good Centaur and his services to the Grecian heroes, are the essential and original legends of the Centaur cycle. The others are, if not derivative, at any rate subsequent and outlying. They bring on to the scene Hercules, whom, as the queller of uncivilised violence in general, it is natural to find in conflict with these among other monsters. And, as the beneficent heroism of Hercules is always in some degree crossed with circumstances of clumsiness and ill-luck, so it is natural to find that his own death is brought about in the long run by his slaying of one Centaur, and that two others, of whose death he is the cause by accident, are old friends and kind hosts of his own. The first of the two Hercules stories is well known. One of the fugitive Centaurs, Nessos, had received from the gods the privilege of conveying passengers for a toll across a deep ford of the river Euenos in Ætolia. Hercules having rescued the Ætolian princess Deïaneira from her terrific suitor, the river-god Achelöos, and taken her for his own wife, was journeying with her from Kalydon to Trachis, when they came to this ford. He charged Nessos to carry over Deïaneira, but the brute nature still wrought within the Centaur, and he laid rude hands on his tender burden in mid passage. At her shriek, Hercules let fly an arrow which pierced the insulter through the heart; but before he died Nessos recommended Deïaneira to make a love philtre from the issue of his wounds; which she did, and having occasion to use the philtre years later upon Hercules, found it to her sorrow to be a consuming poison, which ended her hero's days

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* ξανθὸς δ' Ἀχιλεὺς τὰ μὲν μένων Φιλύρας ἐν δόμοις
παῖς ἐὼν ἄθυρε μεγάλα ἔργα, χερσὶ θαμινὰ
βραχυσίδαρον ἄκοντα πάλλων, ἴσα τ' ἀνέμοις
μάχᾳ λεόντεσσιν ἀγροτέροις ἔπρασσεν φόνον,
κάπρους τ' ἔναιρε, σώματα δὲ παρὰ Κρονίδαν
Κένταυρον ἀσθμαίνοντα κόμιζεν,
ἑξέτης τοπρῶτον, ὅλον δ' ἐπειτ' ἂν χρόνον.—Pind. *Nem.* iii. 43 *sqq.*

in agony. The second story is less familiar, and belongs to the wildest mountain region of the Peloponnese, on the borders of Arcadia and Elis. Among those mountains, it was said, dwelt a tribe of Centaurs, they also being sometimes described as fugitives from Pelion. They were the terror of travellers, and among other lawless exploits two of their number, Rhœkos and Hylaios, had once attempted violence upon Atalanta; but that virgin huntress had turned upon them with her arrows and slain them both. One nevertheless, and a chief among them, was friendly and humane like Cheiron; his name was Pholos (after which was supposed to be called that of the mountain which he haunted, Pholoê), and he was the son of Silenos by Melia, the nymph of an ash-tree. When Hercules came to this neighbourhood, on the labour of the Erymanthian boar, he sought hospitality in the cave of his old acquaintance Pholos, who set roast meat before his guest, while he supped on raw himself. But Hercules must needs call for wine with his meat, and when Pholos hesitated, saying it was dangerous to open the great jar in which the Centaurs kept their common store of wine—"What care I?" replied Hercules, and himself uncovered the jar. Straightway the Centaurs in the neighbouring forests were aware of the savour, and came pelting from the heights, and gathered about the cave of Pholos, and threatened Hercules with boughs and boulders. The two foremost of the intruders he slew with brands plucked from the fire, and then caught up his bow, and went out against the rest, and sent his arrows among them, and pursued them with a great slaughter as far as Cape Malea and the sea. Here, at Cape Malea, Cheiron had at this time his refuge, and by misadventure a shaft from the bow of Hercules, having passed through the arm of another Centaur, went and wounded Cheiron in the knee. Hercules was grieved at this, and pulled out the arrow from the wound and applied herbs to it according as Cheiron instructed him. But Centaur's blood is a poison without antidote, as Deïaneira knew to her cost,* and Cheiron's wound was incurable, so that he lay desiring death; but being immortal he could by no means die, until by permission of Zeus he changed conditions with Prometheus, to whom he parted with his immortality, and so died. And Zeus, so the later fable ran, set Cheiron for a sign in heaven, where we see him to this day (there are two constellations to which this figure is given, one the zodiacal sign Sagittarius, and the other the southern sign Centaurus).† Ovid tells this story differently, and represents the death of Cheiron as having been brought about by his careless handling of one of the arrows of Hercules, when that hero came to visit him, while the young Achilles was still in his charge, in his cave on Mount Pelion. The arrow had been steeped in the blood of Centaurs and of the

* τὸν γὰρ βαλόντ' ἄτρακτον οἶδα καὶ θεὸν
Χείρωνα πημήναντα, χὤντερ ἂν θίγῃ,
φθείρει τὰ πάντα κνώδαλ'.—Soph. *Trach.* 714.

† Aratus, *Phæn.* 486; Lucan. *Phars.* 6, 393.

Lernæan hydra; Cheiron let it fall upon his foot, and died after a nine days' agony. Other writers have it, that such as this was the end, not of Cheiron, but of the other good Centaur, Pholos; Hercules, they say, coming back to the cave of Pholos after the slaughter at Cape Malea, found that Pholos had pulled an arrow from the wound of a dead companion, and was examining it, and marvelling how so small a weapon could make an end of so huge a foe, when inadvertently he let the arrow drop, so that it pierced his foot and killed him on the instant.

And this is the end and extermination of the Centaurs, in so far as they belong to the old and heroic legends of the land, and until we find the breed revived in the fancy of later generations, when they are represented no longer as waging war with heroes, but as tamed, transformed, and sportive, and masquing, like other creatures of the woodland, in the company of Bacchus and his Fauns.

II.

Such being the chief fables of antiquity concerning these monsters and their doings, let us see if we can trace them to their origin, and learn what meanings lay latent and forgotten beneath their fantastic tenor.

To the making of tales like these, many different elements contribute. Phrases of poetry, repeated with strengthening belief from generation to generation—personifications of natural forces, acquiring dramatic consistency in proportion as their original meaning fades from mind—stories thus arising, which the ethical and patriotic instincts of a race lay hold upon and develop, until they become pregnant both with moral teaching and ancestral praise—in trying to interpret any myth, it is necessary to take into account all these various materials of its growth, as well as the dim traditions of scarcely recoverable fact, the records of primeval races and their wars, with which such workings of the pure imagination may be mixed up. In the interpretation of the Centaur-myth, it has been too much the fashion, from the scholiasts of antiquity down to our own day, to explain everything by the last, the so-called historic element. It is a natural metaphor, said the critics, to speak of a rider and his horse as one; and tribes ignorant of riding are accustomed so to speak of mounted tribes whose acquaintance they make for the first time. The historical Centaurs, then, they went on, were no doubt an early tribe of Thessalian riders; and besides that, their name denotes that they were buffalo-hunters, as it were *Tauro-kentæ*, stickers or spearers of bulls. This mode of accounting for the fable has been worked out most completely, among ancient writers, by Palæphatus, in his treatise on *Things Incredible*, and among moderns by a German commentator on one of Sir William Hamilton's vases. It is worth while to attend for a moment to these characteristic instances of a mode of explaining ancient myths, now obsolete enough, but for many centuries universal, which ignores their true origin in the creative workings of the mind, and seeks to reduce

them to real history by stripping them of the marvellous, which is at once their essence and their charm. Palæphatus proceeds with assurance and circumstantiality. There was once, he says, a race of wild bulls on Mount Pelion, which both harried the plain and made access to the mountains dangerous, until Ixion, king of Larissa, offered a reward to any that would destroy them. Thereupon certain young men of a village called Nephelê, up among the mountains, bethought themselves of the plan of breaking and riding the horses of the country, and so pursuing the bulls. Which they did, and having ridden down the bulls and slain them with javelins, they earned their reward from the king, and received the name of Bull-slayers. But presently they waxed insolent, and when they were invited to a wedding-feast by the Lapiths, got drunk and carried off the women, and afterwards waged continual war against the dwellers on the plain, riding down on midnight forays and taking to flight in the morning; so that the scared people, who only saw the backs of man and horse as they disappeared, by degrees got to speak of the robber-tribe as men-horses, and of their stronghold Nephelê as their mother the Cloud. The modern scholar is not so *naïf* as this ancient rationalist, but he is almost as wide of the mark. Accepting the old derivation from bull-sticking, he establishes the fact that the riders of Thessaly were famous from of old, and that in historical times several of the Thessalian towns had festivals like the bull-fights of Spain, in which bulls were goaded and killed by mounted antagonists. The Centaur-myth he then supposes to have sprung from a fusion of Thessalian legend with Asiatic religion. As monsters are alien to the spirit of Greek, but natural to the spirit of Asiatic mythology, and as we sometimes see Centaurs in the company of Bacchus, a god whose knowledge and worship first established itself in a region of Greece contiguous to Thessaly, in the mountains of Thrace, our author supposes that those savage riders and hunters of native story will have gradually become confounded with monsters imported in the train of Bacchus; and hence the fable of the Centaurs as we know it.

Now with reference to the association of the Centaurs with Bacchus, that, we shall see, is an after-thought of later Greeks, and does not appear in early art or literature at all. And with reference to the whole theory of the derivation from bull-sticking—it is plausible, but will not hold; the form of the name Centaur is etymologically quite against it; and what is more, the mythologic Centaurs, though they were hunters before all things, were in truth not hunters of bulls and buffaloes, and their weapon was not the spear. In a hundred representations we see them with the game they have killed slung over their shoulders, but it is invariably small game—hares, foxes, or deer, and much most commonly hares—except, I think, in the instance of a single gem, which does indeed represent a Centaur killing a bull, but which belongs to quite a late time of art, and only illustrates the derivation already current. So again, with the single

exception of Cheiron, and that only in the late legend of his translation, in the character of an archer, to the skies—with this exception, it is a perfectly regular characteristic of the Centaurs that they do not carry javelins, bows, or other civilised weapons at all; their prey they overtake by fleetness of foot, and in battle they invariably either hurl stones, or smite with untrimmed stakes and pine-branches. So let us dismiss the obvious but untenable derivation from the Thessalian buffalo-hunters, who may have had an historical existence if we please, but neither in name nor nature had anything to do with the mythologic Centaurs.

That the equestrian habits of those districts may have had a share in determining the form and colour of the myth and in making it popular, we need not deny. But we must look for its origin farther back, in that which is the origin of most myths, in the dealings of the primitive imagination with the phenomena of nature. Some authors have endeavoured to prove that the Centaurs, in their name and to a certain extent in their character, are akin to the Sanskrit *Gandharvas*, personifications of certain aspects of the clouds. In the Vedic and later Indian mythology, these Gandharvas occur under forms too various, vague, and shifting to offer any strict analogy with the Greek fable; neither does the Greek name come regularly from the Sanskrit. But the fables do seem to be akin. The Gandharvas sometimes remind us of Cheiron, when they are described as the wise companions of Indra, skilled in music and song; at other times of Eurytion and his herd, when we are told of their inordinate passions. They are not described as themselves like horses, but as being drawn by horses, swift and splendid and of many colours. Granting, however, that the Centaurs may possess affinities with, or contain reminiscences of, the Gandharvas, still what concerns us is the Greek myth, and to get at the meaning of this we must take it as we find it in the Greek form; we must consider the Centaurs apart from dubious congeners and halting derivations, and see if we cannot find their explanation in themselves.

That like other Greek monsters they are powers of nature's violence to begin with, is plain from their genealogy. Not clouds, but sons or grandsons of the cloud they are called, engendered in a dark hour among the precipices and ravines of Pelion. Their names as we find them in the oldest writings and works of art, have about them a ring of crag and forest; they are called Petraios, he of the rocks; Hylaios, he of the woods; Dryalos, he of the oaks; Agrios, the wild one; Asbolos or Laibolos, the stone-hurler; Arktos, the mountain bear; Peukeidai, sons of the mountain pine; Oreios or Orobios, again a name taken from the mountain or the mountain-strength; Imbros or Imbreus, a name of rain-storms; Krenaios, a name of water-springs; Eurytos or Eurytion, a name of flowing and expanse. What natural powers, then, of the wilds and heights will they, so born and named, represent? The answer does not seem far to seek.

In this birth and in these natures we seem to find the very similitude of the force of storm-fed torrents and cataracts. Under what guise should men more naturally think of those than under the guise of children of the cloud, made to gallop, leap, and fling themselves like horses, and at the same time to grasp, carry away, and hurl like men? The names correspond, and so do the weapons—the trunks and boulders which the torrent tears up and whirls along in its course. The ordinary river-god of Greek mythology is, we know, a bull with the head of a man, but sometimes with the whole trunk of a man as well, when his figure becomes quite analogous to that of a Centaur, as may be seen on a vase representing the combat of Hercules and Acheloös in the British Museum. And it is of course not less true that the horse, on its part, is also a regular symbol for the motion and power of water, and on that account was fabled to have been created by Poseidon, the god of the sea. And according to Apollodorus, it was no other than the same Poseidon who received to himself, and concealed within the heart of a mountain, the last stragglers among the defeated Centaurs of Arcadia.

This interpretation once suggested, we seem to find it unconsciously confirmed by many phrases of the poets, in which the words they use of Centaurs might be transferred back, and applied literally to mountain-streams. Thus Euripides speaks of the Centaurs rushing down from Mount Homolê, their arms filled with pines, to course over the tilled lowlands and lay them waste. And Lucan: "Upon these" (the mountains of Thessaly) "*a cloud's pregnant womb poured forth amidst the Pelethronian caves the demi-brutal Centaurs, offspring of Ixion.*"* And Virgil: "As when a pair of cloud-born Centaurs *race down from the heights, from the snows of Homolê or Othrys, the great forest makes way for their going, and its boughs yield with a noise of crashing.*"† For "Centaurs" read "floods" or "torrents," and the sense is evidently as good. And this account of the origin of our monsters will be still further confirmed if it is found to fit with an equally appropriate account of their mythical kinsmen and antagonists, the Lapiths. Now this is precisely what we do find. The word *Lapithæ* is akin to both Greek and Latin words, meaning "stone" or "rock," and several verbs denoting obduracy are formed from the same root. The fact that mountain-citadels bearing the name Lapithê, Lapithas, or Lapithai existed in various remote parts of Greece, seems to show that the name is mythic, and not that of any real tribe. Again, of the individual Lapiths, several are proved by their names to stand for personified powers of the forest, wild, and mountain.

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* Illic semiferos Ixionidas Centauros
Feta Pelethroniis nubes effudit in antris.—Lucan. *Phars.* vi. 386 *sqq.*

† Ceu duo nubigenæ cum vertice montis ab alto
Descendunt Centauri, Homolen Othrynque nivalem
Linquentes cursu rapido; dat euntibus ingens
Silva locum, et magno cedunt virgulta fragore.—Virg. *Æn.* vii. 647 *sqq.*

Thus Kaineus, whose name signifies slayer, has a father, Elatos, named from the fir-tree, and a son, Koronos, named probably from a belt or ring of rock; and thus in such names of Lapiths as Dryas, man of the oaks, Hypseus, man of the heights, Charaxos, man of the torrent-clefts, Leonteus, lion-man, Hoplos or Hopleus, man in armour, we realise the cousinhood which exists between the Centaurs and their antagonists; they are beings of a common stock. And once more, when Homer in the Iliad describes the stand made against a terrific rush of Trojan assailants at the gates of the Grecian camp by the two Lapith heroes Leonteus and Polypœtês, he describes it in terms which seem to betray an unconscious reminiscence of that which a Lapith originally meant. While all the rest of the Greeks are huddled in rout, these two, stubborn in their strength, stand fast and shrink not, "*like oaks mightily rooted in the mountain, which defy the wind and rain day by day.*"*

If the Centaurs, then, are powers of assault, the Lapiths, it seems, are powers of resistance: if the Centaurs are a race of mythic monsters whose violence is the violence of cloud-born flood and cataract, the Lapiths are a race of mythic giants whose stubbornness must be the stubbornness of earth-rooted rock and tree. The conflict between the monsters and the giants, in its primitive sense and meaning, will have been an imaginative version, given by early dwellers in Thessalian hills, of the conflict of torrent-strength against mountain-strength in the stormy fastnesses above their homes. The headlong foe is vanquished, for against cliff and forest the cataracts spend their strength in vain. This physical fable, as it passed through the mouths of successive generations, by degrees acquires both dramatic consistency and ethical significance. Because the floods, although they ravage, fertilise, therefore to the Centaurs or flood-demons is attributed sexual rage. Because the floods are sudden and destructive, therefore the flood-demons are thought of as subject to the freaks of drunkenness; and so to the lust of women in the Centaurs is added the lust of wine. The weapons of branch and boulder, first given them as proper to their physical nature, are retained as characteristic of their savagery in the scale of being; and to make the character complete, the raw diet and the hunter's life are added. It is easy to conceive how the stream of mythic story thus set going would absorb and carry along with it any materials that might be supplied by the actual history of the regions. If there happened real wars between mounted and unmounted tribes, the exploits of the combatants would become merged in those of the typical torrent-cavalry and rock-infantry of the myth. If there happened raids and reivings, harrying of crops and seizing of women by savage mountaineers, their descents would be confounded in story with the descent of the personified mountain-floods.

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* Τὼ μὲν ἄρα πρόπαροιθε πυλάων ὑψηλάων
ἔστασαν ὡς ὅτε τε δρύες οὔρεσιν ὑφικάρηνοι
αἵ τ' ἄνεμον μίμνουσι καὶ ὕετον ἤματα πάντα,
ῥίζῃσιν μεγάλῃσι διηνεκέεσσ' ἀραρυῖαι.—*Il.* xii. 131–134.

And when the idea of the Centaurs, thus developed, dramatised, and enriched, spread from Thessaly over the rest of Greece, the popular imagination would class them among the other monsters and scourges of primeval days, and would assign a share in their overthrow to the popular heroes by whom such creatures in general were held to have been overthrown—the Athenians, to their own hero Theseus, the Dorians, to the hero both of their race and of all Hellas, Hercules.

But how, it may be asked, about Cheiron? Granting your derivation for the wicked Centaurs, how will it serve for the mild and wise one? The answer is, that torrents are not always in flood, nor are mountain-streams all of them rapacious. Sometimes they devastate, at other times they gladden; some descend with damage and terror, others are life-giving and serviceable. One of the strong points of our derivation is, in truth, that it explains, what had long been regarded as a puzzle, why Cheiron should be of the same monstrous shape as the other Centaurs. He is so shaped because he also is a power or genius of the streams of Pelion. But he personifies those streams in their gentleness, and not in their fury. His name Cheiron is from *cheir*, "a hand;" so that he is the handy, or useful one; the skill he teaches Jason and Asklepios is the *soft-handed* skill of medicine;* and when his mother is called Phillyra and a Naiad, it is as much as to say that he himself is concerned especially with herbs and waters. The vegetation of Mount Pelion, says Theophrastus, is the most medicinal in Greece; and, in fact, we know that in this mountain-range there were places hallowed in all times of Greek history for their salubrity, and that among the valleys opening out from it, some were famous for yielding herbs of virtue. Here was the very cradle of the art of medicine, the legendary training-ground of Asklepios and his sons. Cheiron, with his leechcraft and his music, with his helpfulness and wisdom, is the incarnation of all the blessings of the land; of its waters when they flow without violence, of the peace of the mountain-recesses whence they issue, of the coolness of the airs about their course, the waving of the leaves above their ripple, and the refreshment of the healing growths they nourish. In the persons of the other Centaurs is expressed the curse of mountain-streams, but their blessing in Cheiron; in them the rudeness of nature's outrages, in him the sweet influences of her benignity; and it is one of the high achievements of the Greek genius that it should have been able to express so aptly, and in symbols that do not allow their affinity to be forgotten, the character of those kindred but contrasted powers.

S. COLVIN.

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* βαθυμῆτα Χείρων τράφε λιθίνῳ
'Ιάσον' ἔνδον τέγει, καὶ ἔπειτεν 'Ασκλήπιον,
τὸν φαρμάκων δίδαξε μαλακόχειρα νόμον.—Pind. *Nem.* iii. 53 *sqq.*

Rose Cherril: An Exile's Love Story.

I.

"My dear," said Miss Smalway, speaking from the eminence of her desk in the pupil room, "I shall insist upon hearing from *Mosier* Brun's own lips whether it has been his purpose to trifle with your affections."

"But I assure you you are mistaken," pleaded Rose Cherril, whose cheeks were all pink; "Monsieur Brun has never said a word which I could construe——"

"Hush, Rose; you might deceive all the world, but you cannot deceive *me*," interrupted Miss Smalway severely. "Will you look me in the face and assert that this unprincipled Frenchman——"

"I do not believe he is unprincipled," muttered Rose.

"You are evading the question, miss. Will you look me in the face and affirm that it would not signify an atom to you if you never saw *Mosier* Brun again?"

It was a very pretty face which the junior governess of Acacia House turned up towards her employer. There was candour in it, and sweetness; but now the clear blue eyes were dim, the little lips which never told untruths quivered, and Rose suddenly burst into tears. She could not imagine how Miss Smalway had discovered a secret which she scarcely confessed to herself. The French master and she were very good friends, but what had that to do with love? Was it love to be civil to a man, to admire his talents, and—to cry thus because one was accused of caring for him?

Miss Smalway triumphed in her perspicacity, and, as she watched the weeping governess, shook her head and remarked that it was just what she had foreseen all along. It was Miss Smalway's habit to foresee things, and Rose, having lived a year under her roof, ought to have been aware by this time that nothing could escape the prying of two eyes searching as telescopes. Miss Smalway was a lean and middle-aged person, who ruled her establishment of forty pupils with kindness, but could not bear that anything relating to them or other members of her household should be concealed from her. She was very short and sharp with pupils who neglected to show her the letters they wrote, or received from home. She stole about the passages at night in list slippers to overhear conversations in the dormitories; she spied upon her governesses, who durst not leave the keys of their desks trailing about lest she should overhaul their private papers; and she taught her housemaids to be sad fibbers by questioning them as to their flirtations

with the baker's man and the pot-boy. In all this Miss Smalway professed to act in the lofty interests of morality, but the one good thing about her was that she never turned the secrets which she had unearthed to an ungenerous advantage.

"I don't see why you should not marry *Mosier* Brun if you like him," she observed after a moment's reflective pause. "Don't cry like that, child."

"Oh, but I'm not half good enough for him," wailed Rose, who was still crying.

"Not good enough! You, the daughter of an English clergyman, not good enough for a trumpery French refugee! Why, if he were to return to his country they would cut off that curly head of his and put it in a sawdust basket. It's as well that you should face this question in the proper light, Rose Cherril; for you are a pretty English girl, bred in a Christian land, and if you consent to marry a foreign pagan the favour will be all on your side."

It was soothing to Rose Cherril to be assured that she was a pretty girl, but she did not like to hear Paul Brun described as a pagan. "I do not know why he has been exiled," she said, "but I have never heard a word from him that was not becoming."

"Oh, of course he is soft-spoken enough," said Miss Smalway, shaking her head, "but he will have to give me something more than fair words when I question him to-day."

"But, indeed, I would much rather you did not question him," repeated Rose ruefully. "He may think I prompted you, which would be dreadful. I would not for worlds let him imagine—— "

"Not a word more, for my determination is inexorable," said Miss Smalway as she closed the ledger in which she had been making up her pupils' half-year's accounts. "It is three o'clock now, and time to ring the class bell. In a few minutes the *Mosier* will be here, and then I will ascertain his mind or he shall have a piece of mine."

Saying this, Miss Smalway nodded her wizen head very resolutely, and Rose Cherril, drying her eyes with a sigh, went out to ring the bell that summoned forty young ladies from the playground to afternoon lessons. After this she ran up to her own room to bathe her eyes in water, in order that the pupils might not see she had been crying.

It was close upon the end of the summer school term at Acacia House, Richmond, and the last drawing and music lessons were to be given on that day. The girls came trooping in from their games of croquet and battledore under the tall trees of the recreation ground, which was a very park, with plats of lawn for those who liked to romp, and shady bypaths for those who preferred to saunter, gossiping. They were a fresh and healthy bevy of girls, whose giggling filled the hall as they hung up their straw hats on the pegs, threw down their mallets and shuttlecocks, and smoothed their hair with the palms of their hands. Some of them were tall marriageable maidens, whose school days were

about to finish; others little mites who dragged skipping-ropes after them, and whose chubby faces were all flushed from the exercise they had been taking under the bright August sun. The day was too fine for lessons, but the holidays were so near that the whole school were in high spirits; besides, to those who were going to do their tasks under M. Paul Brun's direction the prospect of an afternoon indoors did not seem irksome. The dozen who formed that day's drawing class repaired to a large parlour that overlooked the park, and laid out their pencils and millboards, waiting for the Frenchman to arrive.

M. Paul Brun—or "the *Mosier*," as the girls called him, out of mimicry of Miss Smalway's pronunciation of the word *monsieur*—taught both drawing and music, and was a prime favourite with all the forty pupils. He had begun by teaching French only, but it had gradually transpired that he could play the piano and sketch very fairly, so that Miss Smalway, moved perhaps by economic reasons, had ended by vesting three educational departments in his hands. He came four days a week, remaining two or three hours each time, and endeavouring, both patiently and good-humouredly, to make his lessons useful. He never volunteered to play compositions of his own, as is the painful custom with certain professors, but after school time was always ready to linger an extra half-hour and rattle off the newest operatic selections, adding a song now and then in the pleasantest of barytone voices. He would draw caricatures to amuse the smallest girls, and sometimes he dropped in during the dancing lessons and offered himself as partner to the backward pupils, who made swift progress by waltzing with him; but he refused the post of dancing master, which Miss Smalway would have pressed upon him in addition to his other duties. A handsome, well-bred, and well-dressed man was Paul Brun. He had black curly hair, dark eyes full of sparkle, and a short, neatly-trimmed beard, which well set off the pale tint of his complexion. The expression on his lips was habitually ironical, but it quickly changed to a winning smile when his eyes met those of the person to whom he was speaking. His temper was most even—the same day after day, whatever happened—and his manners were those of a perfect gentleman—agreeably polite towards people who were ceremonious, quietly and cheerfully amiable to those who were not: towards his pupils he behaved rather like an elder brother, though without familiarity. It was known that he had been an officer in the French army, and had got mixed up in the Commune; but this was all that the girls did know of him, for he never spoke of his own concerns, albeit he had been obliged to make a disclosure of his antecedents to Miss Smalway once and for all for peace's sake. But, to do Miss Smalway justice, she had kept his revelations to herself. At the period of this story Paul Brun was about thirty years old, and had been in the land of his exile six years, so that he spoke English fluently, notwithstanding his slight foreign accent.

The pupils had been sitting ten minutes in the drawing parlour, and

the *Mosier* was a little behind his time. He came at last, striding over the lawn with quick steps, but looking downcast. Now Miss Smalway's pupils—perceptive, after the manner of girls—had noticed that Paul Brun had been looking out of sorts for some weeks past, and that he assumed his cheerfulness when he came among them, as it were a mask. Boys would not have troubled themselves about the physiognomical disturbances of such an insignificant creature as a French master; but girls must needs tattle, and there had been much conjecture at Acacia House as to what could have gone wrong with the *Mosier*. Had he fallen in love with his landlady, or was he in arrears with his washerwoman? The elder pupils, giving free rein to their humour, supposed all sorts of absurdities, and made it their amusement to imagine something new every day, going so far as to pretend that the Frenchman's only complaint was tight boots. Such exercises were sternly restrained in the classes presided over by the senior governess, Miss Bickel, who was a sour-visaged person, averse from merriment; but on the day of which we are speaking the drawing class was under the supervision of the second governess, Miss Boundy, a plump Essex virgin, whose only mode of protesting against the waywardness of her young charges was to exclaim, "Oh, I wish you wouldn't talk such nonsense," following up these weak remonstrances with a titter which took all the sting out of them.

So as the unconscious *Mosier* crossed the lawn a running fire of pleasantries was kept up to the mute accompaniment of the crayons and stumps working on the sketching blocks, but these were checked by an unexpected sight, which caused a sudden silence to fall upon the class. Just as Paul Brun was nearing the house Miss Smalway sailed out majestuously on to the lawn to greet him, and the two turned away and began to pace together under the trees. The mere sight of Miss Smalway was generally enough to chill all merriment in her pupils, for she was a rigid disciplinarian: but there was something in her manner of accosting the Frenchman this time which especially excited their curiosity. Her manner was portentously grim, and the *Mosier* was seen to be gesticulating. They walked several times up and down the same alley, and appeared to be quarrelling—they, whose relations were usually made up wholly of mutual smirks! What could the matter be? Even the languid Miss Boundy ceased cutting her pencils, and speculated within herself whether the Frenchman had at last struck for an increase of salary? A full half-hour passed, and wonder culminated into a sort of dismay when the *Mosier* was observed lifting his hat to Miss Smalway, who, after this cold leave-taking, returned indoors without him—marching quick and very red in the face.

"Oh my! there has been a squabble!" chorussed several of the pupils; but the next minute there was silence again, for Miss Smalway walked into the drawing parlour, and all the girls pored over their work studiously as mice.

"Girls, you will have to get on to-day without *Mosier* Brun," said the mistress as she stood in the doorway, evidently in the state known as "tantrums;" "by next term I shall have engaged another music and drawing master."

"Why, is Mossieu Brun going? He is not ill, is he?" asked Miss Boundy, open-eyed and amazed.

"The *Mosier* has given me formal notice of his resignation," said Miss Smalway solemnly, "and I wish I could add that we had parted on good terms, but I cannot."

The twelve pupils sat aghast. In losing Paul Brun they every one lost a friend. When Miss Smalway had retired their indignation burst forth, and the remarks which they passed on their mistress were not complimentary. "Oh, the odious old cat! she has done some mean thing about money," observed the more knowing ones; and others talked of asking their parents to withdraw them from Acacia House, since the lively *Mosier* was no longer going to teach there. A mutinous spirit was rife in the school during the rest of the afternoon, and even the sharp Miss Bickel was unequal to keeping order in her division. How much less, then, could Rose Cherril maintain it in hers! It was her turn to take the singing-class, and when Miss Smalway came into the music-room to make an announcement similar to that which she had published in Miss Boundy's class, the junior governess's face became wan, and it was a merciful relief to her that the girls began to babble at such a rate that all singing was out of the question. How could she have sung with her heart drooping in speechless dejection?

II.

When the afternoon classes were ended, and the pupils of Acacia House were partaking of weak tea and bread-and-butter in the refectory, Miss Smalway summoned Rose Cherril into her study for the purpose of venting her sentiments. She sat in a chair of state behind a table covered with copy-books and tradesmen's bills; her grey brow glowered, and the first remark she uttered was aimed like a projectile in a combat.

"Above all things," she said, with a comminatory wag of the head, "I must request that you never again mention the name of that Frenchman in my presence, Rose Cherril."

Now this was the more irrational as Rose had never mentioned Paul Brun's name (at least to Miss Smalway) of her own accord except in connection with school matters. But Miss Smalway only said this by way of opening fire.

Rose stood in the middle of the room, her pretty head bent, and blushing as if she deserved reproach. The day's events had taken her aback, and this sudden exposure of the tenderest, most sacred feelings of her heart before Miss Smalway was trying to her maidenly modesty.

But she was a straightforward girl, who could bear herself in a false position with dignity.

"I am afraid you have had a painful interview with Monsieur Brun," she said. "I know you meant kindly by me, Miss Smalway, but I wish you had not spoken to him."

"I did not act out of kindness to you," answered the schoolmistress truthfully. "It is my duty to know the ins and outs of idylls that take place under my roof, and that is why I asked this *Mosier* to tell me, like a man, how he meant to deal with you."

"I knew he could not care for me," faltered Rose.

"But the man loves you so that he grew quite stupid prosing over your perfections."

"He loves me?" echoed Rose, whose eyes suddenly lit up, whilst a deep tinge overspread her face and brightened it.

"Yes, the madcap! it's for love of you that he has been moping these many weeks, and yet he says there is a barrier between you and him which he cannot break down. A barrier forsooth. Now, Rose Cherril, are you a girl of spirit or do you mean to sit down tamely under this sort of fudge?"

"What am I to do?" asked Rose, who was in a soft rapture, caused by the words she had just heard.

"Do? Why, would you have me believe that it is a matter of no moment to you that a man who has stolen your heart should act like a lunatic?"

"Miss Smalway——"

"This Frenchman is trifling with you," screamed the scraggy schoolmistress. "For he says that he is not married, and yet not at liberty to marry, though he will not speak more explicitly. Do you think that if any young man loved me, and I loved him, I would suffer us to be parted by some nonsensical reason that was not explained to me? I would run after the creature to the end of the world, and say to him, 'Out with your secret, sir, out with it. Don't think to make a goose of me, sir. I'm a young woman who knows what is due to my sex.'"

Any third party would have been amused by the vehemence which Miss Smalway threw into her dictation of a maiden's duties under amorous circumstances; but Rose of course saw nothing to smile at. She was puzzled to think what could be the reason that prevented Paul Brun from marrying *anybody*, and deeply distressed was she that there should be such a reason. Pitying the exile's woes more than her own, she was afraid that some great sorrow must be clouding his life. Rose knew little of Paul's history beyond the fact that he had incurred a capital sentence for taking part in an insurrection; but might it not be that the shame of this condemnation oppressed him more than he cared to own, and made him morbidly reluctant to ask any girl to wear a name which some might consider disgraced? Miss Smalway, however,

dispelled these conjectures by the account she vouchsafed of her interview with the Frenchman.

"I asked the man whether he lived in fear of the police, but he answered No," said she, rubbing her lean nose till it glowed. "He relies that an amnesty will some day allow him to re-enter his precious country, and meanwhile he is not the least ashamed of being an outlaw, for he says that he is only the soldier in a vanquished cause that will triumph some day, and other such flapdoodle stuff. As to money, he appears to have enough, for his educational books are selling well, and he confesses that he acts as London correspondent to some Parisian paper. 'Why, in the name of patience, then, can't you marry?' I asked for the tenth or eleventh time; but he only wobbled that foreign head of his, sighing and vowing that if he had fancied he was going to disturb your peace he would have taken himself off long ago. He took that opportunity of resigning his functions in my academy, saying that he had felt for some while that it was too miserable to see you so often without daring to tell you how dear you were to him. 'Well, then,' said I, 'you may flatter yourself that you have done a fine piece of work by your dearie. If you had seen her crying her eyes out this afternoon, you might have reflected that it's not so easy to mend a broken heart as a teacup.'"

"Oh, Miss Smalway, did you tell him that?" exclaimed Rose, scarlet with confusion.

"Of course I did, and I promise you I made him wince," rejoined the implacable schoolmistress. "But now, Rose Cherril, your fate is in your own hands. If you like to prove to this *Mosier* that you are not a bread-and-butter miss, to be flouted at his pleasure, we will go up to London to-morrow and rout him out at his lodgings, and you shall have it out with him in my presence."

"No, thank you. Oh! anything but that," replied Rose, shocked at the suggestion.

"As you please," observed Miss Smalway, puckering up her lips; "but in that case, having done my best for you, I wash my hands of your concerns. And now let us talk of something else." Here the schoolmistress abruptly altered her tone. "I want you to go into Richmond and carry some orders to the confectioner and florist about our prize-day feast; there are so many ices to be bespoken, and other things which you will find on this list. You don't object to taking a walk?"

"No; I should like it," said Rose Cherril faintly. "Am I to go alone?"

"Yes. If it is your turn to take the first class for their airing, you must ask Miss Boundy to do that in your stead. After what has occurred to-day I dare say you will like to have your evening to yourself, eh?"

Rose did feel that she would like to have the evening to herself, for her brows throbbed to aching. But the schoolmistress was not prompted by any feeling of considerateness in giving her junior gover-

ness a free evening. It had merely struck her that Paul Brun might be prowling about Richmond, waiting if perchance he might see Rose. Men who learn that they are deeply beloved by the objects of their affection do not make themselves scarce without striving for one last sentimental interview; and Miss Smalway reasoned within herself that if Rose and the *Mosier* did meet, the latter's secret might come out, and she (Miss S.) might learn it secondhand from the governess. She had a first-rate capacity for worming out things from those who were dependent upon her.

But it flashed on Rose Cherril also like a presentiment that she might possibly meet Paul Brun.

As she dressed in her little room, putting a straw bonnet on her bright wavy hair, and drawing on her neat grey gloves, she mused that Paul would surely not go away without trying to wish her good-by. The thought made all the blood in her veins tingle, and her fingers trembled as they buttoned the gloves. She doubted whether she ought to go out. She would not have dared venture out of doors unless she had been ordered. For what should she say, and how would *he* answer, if they met? Miss Smalway's interference had certainly done no good; and perhaps Paul had been made angry by the things which had been said to him, and which he may have thought came from Rose herself. Oh, how much better it would have been if Miss Smalway had let matters alone! These were the ideas which crowded upon poor Rose and made her dread to meet the Frenchman, while the next moment she shivered to think how wretched and lonely her life would be henceforth if she never more heard the voice which had so often charmed her—if it were not given her by a squeeze of the hand, a smile, a parting look—by any token, in short—to feel that Paul deplored as much as she did the fatality which was to put them asunder.

Rose Cherril was a good girl as well as a pretty one. The youngest daughter of a country vicar who had many children, she had been sent out into the world to do the best she could for herself; and she knew that she had only her own character and industry to rely on for daily bread. She could not afford to make a single mistake in life, for her relatives were too poor to help her; but, on the other hand, she was independent, for they would not have objected to her marrying whom she pleased. Patient, clever, self-reliant, and conscientious, Rose was not one of those girls who need much guidance, and to whom beauty is a danger. Temptations had beset her, but she had passed safely by them in the strength of her innocency, which was full but not prudish. Luxuries and pleasures would have wooed her in vain, for her tastes were not frivolous; but she had given her heart to Paul Brun because he was even more lonely than she, and because he seemed good, gentle, and brave. It was the old, old story. He had used no witchcraft in his suit but that of letting the simple English girl know that he was friendless, and she had loved him before being aware that the sentiments she

entertained towards this outlaw were such as would have induced her to make any sacrifice for his sake, and to follow him wheresoever he would, for better or worse.

Shall one blame the girl if she unconsciously tried to look her best as she attired herself to go out to her trysting? The bow which she placed on her light muslin dress was of the colour that the Frenchman loved; she gathered one of his favourite scarlet roses in passing through the garden, and stuck it in her girdle. Altogether she looked the picture of comely, winsome girlhood as she walked out alone with throbbing pulses on that genial evening, while the birds were twittering as they gathered to their roosts, and the air was filled with the golden light of a summer sunset.

III.

At about the time when Rose Cherril set out on her walk a mysterious meeting of foreigners was being held at a riverside house some miles from Richmond—near Chelsea.

The dozen persons who composed this assembly were all well known to Paul Brun, and equally so to the police of the different countries to which they belonged. They were remarkable men every one—bearded thinkers, writers, plotters; professed friends of mankind so far as theories went, but ruthless as to the means by which their theories were to be practically applied. They formed the central lodge of one of the numerous branches of the "Marianne," and were met together at the house of the "head centre," a Frenchman named Cramoiseau, to concert measures for one of those political crimes which periodically startle the Continent, but which to their minds seemed philanthropic enterprises, as tending to the emancipation of the human race. They had a secondary object, however, which was to "judge" Paul Brun, who was a member of their association.

In the language of secret societies that word "judge" has a terrible signification. When a man has been inveigled into joining a society whose aims are revolutionary, whose weapons are craft, mystery, and murder, and whose bond is obedience, he becomes subject to a code of laws beside which the tyranny of despots is mildness. He must render account of his thoughts as well as his acts; he must give not cold fidelity, but burning zeal in support of a cause which he has sworn to serve to the exclusion of all other interests; and if he ceases to do this he becomes suspected of treachery. Men who carry their heads in their hands, and who know that their strength depends wholly on their union, cannot afford to have a laggard among them. Now of late it had been noticed that Paul Brun, who had not thrown himself into the revolutionary movement with apparently unquenchable enthusiasm, had become tepid in the good cause. He gave excuses for not attending the meetings of the lodge, he shunned the company of the brethren, he had once or twice ignored orders which had been given him for the service of

the propaganda, and all this at a time when the designs of the society were ripe for action. It looked like cowardice, but it might be something worse, and the members of the lodge, who were of needs on their guard, were resolved to punish him unless he mended his manners.

Twelve seemingly inoffensive men they were who sat round the table in M. Cramoiseau's ground-floor parlour, but they all of them had that restless look in the eyes which belongs to conspirators and to hunted animals. Cramoiseau himself, whose ostensible profession was that of commission agent, was a swarthy little man who fidgeted incessantly. He took things up and laid them down, bit his nails, glanced out of the window, talked out of his turn, and yet always spoke to the point, bringing down his remarks like pins, as it were, to stick the conversation on its proper issues. Beside him sat a bony, hard-faced German, who smoked a pipe and emitted his observations with dogmatical wordiness clouded in long gusts of tobacco; then came a well-dressed Pole, whose linen and teeth were equally white, but who had the wrinkled face of an ape; then two Italians, a Russian with soft eyes and a sad smile, another German with a sharp chin and sandy-grey hair flowing over his collar, and the rest were Frenchmen. Most of these brethren smoked, but they were sober, and had no refreshment besides cold water, which they drank when their throats were dry from talking.

The room in which they sat was one of those poor, tawdry places peculiar to semi-genteel lodging-houses, and which bring home so forcibly to exiles the absence of home comforts. It was furnished with hard, angular chairs of horsehair; the frame of the low pier-glass over the mantleshelf was swathed in yellow muslin, to keep flies off; and the walls were decked with a few cheap bad prints from illustrated newspapers. But through the open window the conspirators had a fine view of the Thames, sweeping by with its traffic of steamers, barges, and wherries. The summer sunlight made the grey waters shine like molten metal, and lent a crystal sparkle to the foam tossed up by the ploughing of keels. Now and then a steam launch glided by like a swan, with a crew of holiday makers who had been picnicking on the upper reaches of the river, and sang as they were coming home; and the careless voices of boys learning to row in gigs could be heard laughing as oars were plied and crabs were caught. English life in its busiest, gayest aspects could be seen by these foreigners, who were plotting under cover of English liberty to do dark deeds in the vain, fantastic, foolish hope of making a new world according to their own strange dreams.

The conference of the assembly lasted long, but on the main point—that of the crime to be committed—they were all agreed. The only question was whether they could venture to act so long as they were uncertain of Paul Brun's loyalty. He possessed all their secrets; by the statutes of their society he was bound to participate in the drawing of lots which was to determine whose hand was to deal the blow that

must be struck for the common good; but if Brun was a traitor, then the brethren were in danger, and it behoved them to put their black sheep out of the way before they embarked on an enterprise of which he was cognisant, and which he might disclose to their enemies. The small Frenchman, Cramoiseau, was Paul's most vehement denunciator, and he maintained that no mercy should be shown him. "And yet," added he, as he nibbled his nails, "I have had him watched, and found nothing suspicious in him. He gives lessons; he writes books; he spends much of his time at a Richmond girls' school. He chums with no enemies of our cause."

"Are there any pretty girls at this Richmond academy?" inquired the bony German, whose name was Hardreich, speaking in guttural French.

"There is a pretty governess, I believe—a Miss Cherril," answered Cramoiseau, fidgeting.

"Ah, that is it, then," remarked Hardreich, puffing solemnly at his long pipe. "If Paul Brun be not a traitor, he is in love."

"It comes to the same thing," exclaimed the Pole with a face like an ape's. "Have we not all sworn to renounce woman's love along with other joys which might make us weak and attach us to life? We are soldiers in the Army of Progress, and must be ready to sacrifice our lives without being concerned by the tears of women or children. He among us who breaks this covenant is no true member of our brotherhood, but an obstacle, and he should die."

"Thou art right, Raczki," quietly said Hardreich. "Do monks and Romish priests marry? and yet they rule half the world. Can man keep a secret when woman's lips try to coax it from him? Hercules was a fool in the hands of Omphale, and Samson was no man when he had met Dalilah."

"In my country," remarked the Russian with the soft eyes and sad smile, "we have women who would give a man the strength he lacked and show him how to strike a blow if his own courage blenched. There are no such men for bravery as our female Nihilists. But can you expect these virile virtues of gentle English maidens, who do not know what it is to be oppressed?"

"The mouths of the English are choke-full of liberty, and they are surfeited," ejaculated one of the Italians bitterly. "As well seek to touch a fat man who has dined with a tale of hunger as hope to enlist the sympathies of this people in our cause. Even their working men do not understand us; how should their women do so?"

"Women have been the perdition of conspiracies a hundred times over," ejaculated Cramoiseau, rumpling his hair and then twitching feverishly at his beard. "But perhaps we are taking it for granted too soon that Paul Brun is in love. I have heard of the pretty governess, but it was not told me that Paul was paying his court to her. Perhaps his lukewarmness arises from his improved circumstances; they say he is beginning to make money."

"He fought bravely on our side during the Commune, and ruined himself by doing so," remarked another of the Frenchmen, whose manners were tranquil as a doctor's in a sick room. "I should have thought his disinterestedness beyond question."

"He was young when he made those sacrifices," observed the gloomy Hardreich, knocking some ashes out of his pipe. "Now that years have elapsed his ardour may have cooled. Men first despise Fortune and then woo her. It is harder to persevere in self-denial than to begin it, and easier to be generous upon impulse than after reflection."

"Yet Brun is no child, and knew to what he pledged himself when he took our oath," cried the Pole Raczki.

"He was hot enough in our cause some months ago," exclaimed one of the Italians.

"If he have the itch for gold on his palm his hand will never close tightly on a dagger-hilt, and he is no mate for us," purred the soft, sad Russian.

"Well, the long and short of it is, we must put him to the proof," ejaculated Cramoiseau impatiently. "If he can justify himself, if he will work with us to the end, well and good; if not, he knows what to expect."

It was resolved that Paul Brun should be put to the proof. As to what would happen if he failed to pass the ordeal to which the brethren would subject him no allusion was made. None of those present would have made any fuss about executing justice on a treacherous comrade, and they knew that they could rely on one another's eternal secresy in such a conjuncture. Their very silence was significant.

"To-morrow at noon we will meet again," said Cramoiseau, wriggling on his chair. "I will send Brun orders to be here, and we will draw our lots in his presence. He shall draw with us."

"If he objects or quibbles, he must not leave this house alive," said the Pole Raczki.

"No. The house is empty," said Cramoiseau. "I have no servants here to spy on us."

"And yonder river tells no tales," chimed in Hardreich, as he refilled his pipe. "See how it rolls, the fitting symbol of a mighty doctrine which gathers strength in its course, and is not to be checked by obstacles —at least, not by such as one man can put in its way. Courage, friends; our doctrines will outlive us all, even as that river will. But I think it is time for us to be going."

Dusk had come on by this time, and the Thames was dotted with the red lights on barges. Overhead a full harvest moon shed mellow beams through the sky and streaked the waters with ripples of silver. The conspirators left the house by twos, and dispersed noiselessly to their different lodgings in the great city of their refuge. The last to go was Cramoiseau, who locked the front door as he went; for he did not live in this house where the lodge held their meetings. No one lived there.

Cramoiseau's residence was in Soho; and having repaired thither in an omnibus, he presently sent out his landlady's boy with an envelope directed to Paul Brun, who had apartments in Bloomsbury. This was safer than trusting the post.

There was no letter in this envelope, but only a small piece of knotted string. The receiver would know what it meant.

IV.

We left Rose Cherril making her way through Richmond. At that season of the year this attractive suburb is always gay of an evening. Road, rail, and stream bring down parties of diners to the different hotels; the four-in-hand, the barouche, and the mail phaeton spin along the main streets towards the "Star and Garter" and "Castle;" and oarsmen in lively boating costumes loaf about the pavements, whiling away the interval before dinner in smoking and criticising the teams of the various equipages.

Miss Smalway's junior governess was not a little stared at by some of these amateurs; but she passed along quickly, like one able to take care of herself, yet not so quickly as to seem in a hurry. There is, even in walking, an art which distinguishes the pure-minded girl from those at whom men are not afraid to smile. But Rose Cherril's heart sank as she advanced, for she saw no signs of Paul Brun. She reached the confectioner's and executed her commission, which related to some dainties which were to be supplied for the annual feast held at Acacia House when the relatives of the pupils came to see the prizes distributed; then she went to the florist's, and her errands were finished, so that she might have returned home. But she remembered that she wanted a pair of gloves, and she proceeded further down the street, almost as far as the railway station. Did she really want those gloves, or was it merely that she could not bear to go home so long as there was a chance of her meeting the Frenchman? She was beginning to think it unkind of him not to have stayed to meet her. Dejection and weariness came upon her soul, making her footsteps lag, so that she was glad to sit down upon entering the hosier's shop.

But Paul Brun was close at hand. While paying for her gloves Rose saw a tall form hovering near the doorway, and a flush, half of delight, half of timidity, kindled at once on her cheek. As she came out he accosted her, raising his hat and looking very smart in his white waistcoat and spotted blue neckerchief. But he seemed melancholy too, and there was a perceptible quaver in his voice as he addressed her.

"Good evening, Miss Cherril. It is my good star that has brought you out."

"Miss Smalway sent me out on an errand," faltered Rose, shaking hands with him.

"I bless her for that," exclaimed Paul, "and also for something

which she told me to-day, and which has made me indescribably happy."

"She told me—I think—you are not coming to Acacia House again?" said Rose, colouring.

"No; and that is why I wished to see you this evening. I have been waiting on the chance that you would come out."

"I am very seldom out alone at this hour, as you know." This was said a little archly.

"I had a presentiment I should meet you, though; but had it been otherwise I should have tried to see you elsewhere, for I *must* speak to you."

No answer from Rose. She had an excuse for not replying, as the street was crowded, and they could scarcely touch on confidential matters walking thus side by side on the pavement. Paul Brun continued to speak alone, more cheerfully than at first.

"What a beautiful evening it is! I have been admiring the view from the Terrace. I saw you coming across the field by the river, and followed you at a long distance. Forgive me for doing so; but can you guess why I so much desired this interview?"

"Yes," answered Rose, who could not tell an untruth; "I have heard what passed between you and Miss Smalway; and, oh, Monsieur Brun, I was so grieved to learn that you were in affliction."

"My sorrow is such as you can partially dispel, if you will trust me, Rose, my darling," said the Frenchman in a low tone. "Let us go to the Terrace; it will be almost an hour before dusk comes on, and we can talk better there than in the streets."

He called her his darling, but she was not flurried, it seemed so natural now. They walked for the next hundred yards without speaking, and passed on to Richmond Terrace. It was not deserted; it never is; there were couples sauntering there, and intent on the same subjects, may be, as Rose and Paul. But the place was not thronged as it is on Sundays, and the French exile could imagine himself alone with the English girl who loved him as they stood beside the hedge together, looking out over the peerless landscape.

The sun had gone down over a crowd of parks and villas. The blue mists on the Brentford meadows were just rising; over Kew hung a white cloud, but Twickenham and Kingston were bathed in a clear afterglow of the tint which promises dry weather, and which for the moment restored the hues of spring to the dark August leaves. By a gentle gradation the landscape on the right, of gardens among houses, dissolved into the view on the country quarter of houses among gardens. There was no rawness in the prospect, like that of a struggling colony; no decay, like that of a nation living on its past reputation; no desolation, for people of all classes wandered about pursuing their pleasure or their business. On the silent highway flowing through the arches of Richmond Bridge, in boats of every form, were women whom foreigners

might have admired for their beauty, and men at whom they might have wondered for their strength. But what most of all struck Paul Brun, as he stood for a minute in mute contemplation, was that the boundaries of cities and townships were here unmarked; that not a fortress could be seen, not a barracks, not so much as a tower, to guard the capital of the greatest empire in the world. The whole wide reach of land was stamped with the seal of England's singular happiness in having no foe without or within.

"What a country it is!" exclaimed the exile in a pathetic transport. "Until I came here I never believed that a nation could be so peaceful and contented. In France people hate each other on account of politics; the land bristles with bayonets and the prisons overflow with rebels. You have never seen the slaughter of civil war, my gentle Rose, nor the rancour that lives after it. May your eyes never witness such sights."

"You talk as if some recollection of your past life were tormenting you," said she, lifting her blue eyes to his face with a compassionate, look.

"My mind is full of torments," replied the Frenchman with a despairing gesture. "Things which once seemed just and holy to me now appear as crimes. I am like a man who has groped long in the dark and emerges into a glory of light which almost blinds him. It is your hand that has led me, and it is from you that come the unutterable pangs which I suffer."

"From me?" echoed Rose, riveting a glance of inquiry on him.

"Yes, from you, dearest," he answered; and, profiting by the emotion which had seized the girl, he possessed himself of one of her hands, which she unconsciously yielded. "Before I knew you I was—but no matter what I was. Now that I have been acquainted with you a year, and felt my admiration for you ripen into love, I worship your virtues also, and would that I could imitate them. Tell me, Rose, is it true that you care enough for me to be my teacher?"

"You told Miss Smalway that you would be sorry if I cared for you," she replied, and a smile flickered over her lips as her gaze met his for an instant.

"I did say that," ejaculated the Frenchman, drawing her hand so close to his heart that she could feel its palpitation. "I said it because it seemed a cruelty to disturb your peace when I was not free."

"If you are not free, why do you ask me?" she exclaimed sorrowfully, and drew her hand from him, whilst her glance sought the ground.

"But perhaps I may become free—some day, if you have the courage to trust me and to wait."

"Are you married, then?"

"No; I swear to you that I am not."

"What can it be, then, that hinders your liberty? Oh, Monsieur Brun, if it is only because you are an exile——" She saw that she was making advances to him and stopped. He might think her for-

ward. But she loved him so deeply, she so thoroughly realised at that moment that there could be no joy in her life away from him, that it was hard to be debarred by etiquette from saying all that was on her lips. She longed to cling to his arm and cry, "Tell me all your trouble, Paul. Our happiness is at stake. Confide in me, as I will in you, and let us meet your difficulties together."

She did not say this, and the Frenchman judged from her attitude that he had offended her. "I am sorry," he muttered with a contrite gentleness that brought the tears to her eyes. "I know that my reticence must seem strange, but I am bound by engagements which I took when I was a younger man, and I am not even free to hint how it comes to be that I am not my own master. I have tried since I knew you to break the fetters which gall my very soul, but all in vain. I will make another attempt before this week is ended; but if I fail I am afraid I must rest under any suspicion which it may please you to form. No woman can be expected to give me the blindfold trust I require. I am well aware of that——"

"Oh, Paul, I will trust you," she interrupted, crying, for she could not bear the infinite wretchedness of his tone.

"Will you trust me?" he exclaimed, with an eager fire leaping into his eyes. "Can you give me a trust which shall count months—perhaps years—as nothing, and wait in the hope that time will release me, as it must some day?"

"I will wait as long as you please," she faltered, abandoning herself to his embrace. "I will do anything that may give you courage and hope."

"Then the confidence shall not be all on your side," exclaimed Paul, excitedly. "Listen, my darling; I will tell you everything. What are compacts to me as weighed against your tears? You have a right to know all, since you are all to me."

"No, tell me nothing," said Rose, putting up a hand to stop him, for he had encircled her with his arm. "Keep your faith and rely on God to help you."

"Oh, what an angel you are!" cried the Frenchman, with a passionate look of adoration on the sweet face lifted towards his. "Think how I will struggle to win you, my darling! In this land of my banishment you can give me a new country, a home, and your beloved self to cherish all the rest of my days. You are not afraid of the rebel, then, whom others scorn? You feel that I should become good under your mild influence? You invoke God: He may hear us for your sake, for I have begun to believe in Him, and to pray to Him, since I feared He might part me from you. Give me that rose at your girdle, darling; it shall be my talisman. Soon—very soon, perhaps—I will return to ask you for the dear hand that holds it. If not—but no; I will speak only of hope to-night——"

Paul Brun did not finish his sentence, but under cover of the dusk—

propitious to lovers—he drew Rose to him, and kissed her on the lips. "Good-night, darling. Pray for me," he whispered tenderly.

"Good-night, Paul. God bless you," Rose answered. The brave girl had given her heart to the exile, and was not ashamed of his kiss.

. . . . . .

One may be sure that Miss Smalway was on the tenter-hooks of expectation to hear what had befallen of the junior governess's evening walk. Rose returned to Acacia House just as it was growing dark, and the pupils were already in their schoolrooms preparing their next day's lessons. After removing her hat and gloves she would have gone to preside over her own class, as usual, but the schoolmistress waylaid her in a passage and led her off to the library. Curiosity seemed to be bursting out of the pores of Miss Smalway's skin, and made it glisten.

"Well, my dear," she began, scarcely taking time to sit down, "have you seen that madcap?"

"I met Monsieur Brun," replied Rose, wincing at this word.

"Ah, I felt bound he would be skulking about somewhere. And what did he say for himself?"

"He asked me to engage myself to him, and I did so," replied Rose with modest dignity.

"Good. And what about his famous secret?"

"I did not ask him to disclose it."

"You did not ask? Then perhaps there was no secret? It was all a hoax?"

"I regret to say that the secret to which you allude exists; but it is enough for me—and I think it should be for others—that Monsieur Brun desires to keep it."

Miss Smalway sat aghast. It was as though, in the place of an expected dainty, a snowball had been thrust into her mouth. She shivered with indignation and began cracking her finger-joints—an ominous symptom with her, as most of the inmates of Acacia House well knew.

"Hoighty-toity, Miss Cherril," she cried. "So you think yourself privileged, whilst living under my moral charge, to go and hold clandestine meetings of an evening with a Frenchman whose life is involved in improper mysteries?"

"There was nothing clandestine in our interview," said Rose with a slight flush. "I have made no secret of it nor of its purport."

"A pretty purport, forsooth! What will your father, sisters, brothers, and aunts say when they hear of your wanting to marry a most suspicious refugee?"

"When they learn that I met him in your household they will feel assured that his character must be above suspicion," was Rose's tranquil rejoinder.

"I may have made a mistake in my estimate of the *Mosier*, Miss Cherril. I do not profess to be infallible."

"I think you *are* making mistakes now in your manner of talking about him, Miss Smalway—especially to *me*."

Rose retired to her room, leaving her employer in a state comparable to nothing but a violent attack of "needles and pins" all over the body. It did not suit Miss Smalway to dismiss Rose Cherril, who was the most efficient of the three governesses and the most popular with the pupils; but neither could she keep about her a person who coolly braved her inquisitions. In the agony of her irritation she called into counsel the two other governesses, Miss Bickel and Miss Boundy, who, much interested in what they regarded as a scandal, recommended patience, alleging that secrets always leak out at last. But as the good-natured Miss Boundy was a damsel who, for her own part, could no more hold a secret than she could grasp a hot poker, she soon confided the "scandal" to the elder pupils. So in twenty-four hours it was known to all the young ladies in Acacia House, to the servants, and to the outsiders who courted these latter, that the *Mosier* was in love with the junior governess, but that there was a present bar to their marriage—the said bar being doubtless, as all unanimously opined, a lawful wife, whom the *Mosier* was hiding away somewhere, according to the artful practice of foreigners.

V.

Paul Brun, on arriving at his lodgings, which were close to the British Museum, found Cramoiseau's envelope with the piece of knotted string inside. He was used to receiving such missives, which were always delivered by hand, and with directions in imitation of printing, so that it was impossible to identify the sender. Conspirators have a horror of post-marks and plain calligraphy, which are apt to furnish damaging evidences in law-courts.

A piece of white string unknotted was a simple summons to attend a meeting of the lodge on the morrow; but the knot signified that urgent business was to be discussed, and that the recipient *must* attend at his peril, laying aside all other affairs for the purpose. It was very rare to issue such imperative mandates, for the brethren were quick to obey: the knot implied that the brother who received it was suspected of remissness by his lodge, and Paul Brun understood this.

In pursuance of a rule, to which he was bound by oath, he burned the envelope and string at his candle; and then he tried to dismiss political concerns altogether from his mind for that evening. Not that he was unaware of the danger in which he stood, but he was in that mood when a man can think only of one thing. He was full of his love for Rose. The flower she had given him, the kiss he had given her, inflamed his senses and kindled the most wondrous visions in his brain. Being a bit of a poet—as what lover is not?—he sat down to write

ecstatic verses to his beloved, by doing which he made the time pass and gradually soothed his mind till the fever of his passion gave place to a hopeful serenity. Then he went to bed to dream again visions not more romantic than those which he saw waking.

Certainly nature had not intended this young Frenchman to be a brooding conspirator. Quick-witted, warm-blooded, an enthusiast in the cause of freedom, he had thrown himself into the revolutionary movement in France partly through the patriotic exasperation caused by the defeats which his country had suffered in the war through Napoleonic misrule, and partly because he had been carried away by the sophistries of some of the Communist leaders who were his friends. By-and-by, when an exile in London, he had joined the "Marianne," because indignation burned within him at the fearfully harsh treatment some of his fellow-rebels had endured, and again because he saw Monarchists plotting in France to overthrow the Republic. He thought that the intrigues in high places, which lead to bloody *coups-d'état*, may be met by conspiracies in low ones, which prepare revolutions—forgetting that one crime does not excuse another, and that a great cause is best served by honest means. It took him years of life amidst sober English influences to see this, but his conversion was not complete till he had met and begun to love Rose Cherril. Then he asked himself whether there could be two measures of right and wrong, and whether things which would seem to Rose heinous and loathsome offences could by any possibility be good. Should murder, duplicity, sedition, be less revolting to the conscience of an upright man because perpetrated on behalf of principles about which not one-thousandth part of mankind are agreed? Paul Brun confessed not, and once doubt had entered into his mind he began to feel ashamed of the oaths he had taken and to wish himself rid of them. He was not less Liberal and Republican than before, but he aspired to serve his cause by open methods, not by underground burrowings and attempts to blow up the foundations of society.

Nevertheless it was no child's play on which he had got engaged, and when he rose in the morning in a calm frame of mind he faced his predicament without any illusions. He could not tender his resignation as a member of the "Marianne" and back out of the lodge as if it were a club. He had been initiated into the mysteries of the association; he knew enough to send most of its members to the hulks, and the fate to which he exposed himself by deserting them was death. He thought of the gloomy Hardreich, of the fanatical Pole Raczki, of Cramoiseau, and the others, who all counted a traitor's life as less than a dog's; and he called to mind sinister stories of false brethren who had been found floating dead in the rivers or hanging in their lodgings, and upon whom juries, for want of evidence, had returned verdicts of accidental death. It may be asked why, if Paul Brun felt his life in danger, he did not take the simple step of asking for the protection of the police; but it did not so much as occur to him to commit this treachery.

Nor did he arm himself when he set out for Chelsea, though he had a revolver and a long clasp knife in one of his drawers. He wished to appeal to the reason of his co-members, not to defy them. If his arguments failed to convince them that they had no right to make him act against his conscience it would be useless to contend physically against numbers.

After breakfasting off a cup of coffee which his landlady brought him, Paul Brun dressed himself in dark clothes, as became the solemnity of the ordeal he was going to face, and he put in his pocket a list (in cypher) of the towns in Europe in which there were lodges of the "Marianne," along with the names and addresses of the principal agents. This list filled several closely lithographed pages, and it was a most important document, for it served as a letter of recommendation between members of different lodges when they were travelling. Paul Brun intended to deliver it up to the head-centre Cramoiseau. He put in the same pocket Rose's flower, which was still fresh and full of perfume; the talisman was wrapped in the copy of verses which he had written in Rose's honour over-night.

Then Paul Brun sallied forth bravely, like a man whose spirits rise at the approach of peril. It was a glorious morning. Ten o'clock was striking from many churches, and as Paul had still two hours before him, he took a walk to Westminster Bridge, and there embarked on one of the steamers for Chelsea. As he threaded the streets, and as he sat by the wheel of the steamer ploughing its way on the broad river past Lambeth, dismal Millbank, and Vauxhall, he mentally rehearsed all he should say to the "brethren," and this buoyed him up. There must be men of sense among them, and he would dare them to meet his arguments by counter arguments, not by irrational dictation. As Rose was to be the prize of his efforts, he felt eloquent enough to move senates, and upon alighting at Chelsea he cleared with rapid steps the short distance to Cramoiseau's house. All the way Paul had purposely forborne to reflect how Rose would bear the blow if she read in the papers one morning that he had been found dead. It was no use unnerving himself by a contemplation of tragic possibilities; much better was it to hope, as he was doing.

Three knocks rapped on Cramoiseau's door in a particular fashion, caused the door to be opened by the head-centre himself, who, having admitted Paul, forthwith locked it and put the key in his pocket. Paul walked down the passage and entered the parlour where the brethren were already assembled and waiting for him. This time they sat, not in the front parlour, but in a back chamber which looked out on to a yard. The shutters and curtains were closely drawn, however, and candles burned on the table as if it were night. There was no smoking, and the brethren, who had been conversing in whispers, lapsed into a moody silence as Paul entered.

They assumed hostile expressions too. Paul offered his hand to the

brother who sat nearest the door—the Pole Raczki—but that patriot declined the greeting; he then held out his hand to the Russian with the soft eyes and sad smile, but was again rebuffed. "Well," said he, turning a little pale, "I will not make a third attempt. It seems I am unwelcome here." And he sat down on a spare chair at the end of the table.

"Thou wast always welcome so long as we could put faith in thee," repeated the German, Hardreich, drily.

"When we give our hands we give our esteem too, or we withhold both," exclaimed Raczki with a sneer.

"Don't let us waste words," cried the fidgety Cramoiseau, who, having shut the parlour door, advanced to the table and began stirring a number of folded papers which had been thrown into a hat. "Silence, if you please. Paul Brun, let me ask you if you remember the rules of our association?"

"I do."

"Why, then, have you absented yourself from our recent meetings?

"Because I have ceased to approve the objects of this society."

An evil murmur ran round the table. "Hush!" cried Cramoiseau, stamping his foot and glaring to obtain silence. "You say you disapprove our objects, but you know that, according to our statutes, an absent member is bound by the decisions of the lodge? Now, we have determined that a certain thing must be done to advance our cause." Here Cramoiseau explained at some length, but in clear, well-set terms, what that thing was. The other brethren listened solemnly and nodded. "You were absent when these resolutions of ours were voted," he said in conclusion. "So much the worse for you. But now we are going to draw lots as to who shall be our instrument in this great enterprise, and you must draw with us. I command you to step forward and take one of the papers out of this hat."

"I refuse," replied Paul, standing up and folding his arms.

"You refuse?"

"I do, because what you are meditating is a crime, and I will not soil my hands in it."

Again an explosion of murmurs arose, and most of the brethren sprang to their feet with menacing looks, but once more Cramoiseau made them hold their tongues. "Are you aware what risks you run by bearding us, Paul Brun?" he asked with forced calm.

"I risk death, perhaps; but before you judge me you shall hear me," cried Paul Brun, and his glance was so bold, his language so energetic, that it momentarily cowed these fanatics. "Listen. I came among you when I was young and believed in your theories. Reason has convinced me that they are wrong. Must I, then, to please you, do a thing which my sense condemns? If so, what right have you to call yourselves apostles of freedom? The tyranny which you would set up is as bad as that which you would break."

"Discipline is not tyranny," interrupted Hardreich; "in every army there must be some to command and soldiers to obey."

"We are not soldiers fighting in the open, but men plotting in the dark," answered Paul Brun. "Each of us can only give obedience so far as his conscience allows, and mine revolts at your decrees. I will not put blood on my hands, since I am convinced that our cause cannot be furthered by such means. I have fought, as you know; so it is not cowardice which makes me recoil. And I am not a traitor, else I should not be standing here. I wish not less heartily than you do the welfare of the people, but I feel that it can only be compassed by peaceful methods and time, which carries on this great strange world of ours, from progress to progress, surely and safely."

Here Paul Brun paused a moment and glanced round the table. The faces of the brethren were fixed on him rather pityingly than angrily, as if they thought him mad. To these men any speech dictated by mere reason seemed claptrap unless the reason tallied with their own. The sneers which Paul Brun saw dammed up the torrent of eloquence which he had prepared to let flow. Instead of speaking he drew out the association list, which he had placed in his pocket, and threw it on the table; but as he did so Rose's flower and his copy of verses fell out too. He made a snatch to pick them up, but the Pole Raczki was too quick for him. Thinking anything in the nature of writing must be a compromising document, he made a snatch at the paper, and was much disgusted to find that it contained only verses.

"Poetry," he said contemptuously.

"Let us see," exclaimed the German Hardreich.

"Thou art growing too idyllic, Paul," remarked the Russian.

"Give me that paper, please," said Paul, red with confusion and considerably put out by some smiles he witnessed.

"No; it shall be thy punishment to hear them read out," said the heavy, sarcastic German. "They may furnish a key to thy mind, which is one of the most complex I have met with—a mind full of compartments. Cramoiseau, as thou art a Frenchman, I pray thee read those verses."

Cramoiseau took the paper with a shrug, and, rather to annoy Paul than to gratify the company, he proceeded to read. Paul made an ineffectual protest, but strong arms held him back when he would have snatched the paper from Cramoiseau's hand. So he had to sit down, looking foolish, while his rhymes were given out for the general delectation.

These are the verses which Cramoiseau read. The French and English versions, side by side, were both of Paul's composition:—

À ROSE.	TO ROSE.
Des lèvres parfumées	Yet those lips were made for tenderest
Que j'ai tant, tant aimées,	blisses;
Et que j'adore,	Why withhold them and prolong my pain?

Mille, mille baisers;
Ce m'est à peine assez,
J'en veux encore.

Et si je t'effarouche,
C'est ta petite bouche
Qui en est cause;
Au frelon, ma mignonne,
Il faut bien qu'on pardonne
D'aimer la rose.

Vois-tu cette hirondelle
Qui s'envole à tir' d'aile
Vers la ramée,
Pour chanter tout le jour
Douces chansons d'amour
Sur sa couvée?

Vois-tu aux champs la fleur,
Splendide de fraîcheur,
Saluer l'auror'?
Vois-tu le papillon
Secouer sur le sillon
Son duvet d'or?

La nature est en fête,
Tout nous dit et répète:
"Aimer, c'est vivre."
Le printemps, plein de séve,
Inspire le beau rêve
Qu'il faut poursuivre.

Je le tiens, car je t'aime,
Et au Paradis même
Je n'envie rien:
Non, je ne connais guère
De bonheur sur la terre
Egal au mien.

Je ne veux ni richesse,
Ni gloire; ta tendresse,
C'est mon désir:
Te voir, et puis entendre
Ton doux rire, ta voix tendre,
Est mon plaisir;

Puis amoureusement
Te presser, murmurant
Mots bienvenus,
Et mettre au cou le soir,
Comme un collier d'ivoir',
Tes beaux bras nus!

Let me snatch a thousand, thousand kisses,
Then begin the kissing o'er again.

Do I fright thee with my urgent longing?
Wherefore tempt me, then, with lips like those?
Nature's laws the wild bee would be wronging,
Could he scorn the fragrance of the rose.

See the swallow, down from ether gliding,
Cleaves in circling dance the lucid air;
Then, beneath the eaves his light wings hiding,
Sings his mate, the fairest of the fair.

See the June fly in his minuet mazy
Streak with azure flight the fallows dun;

See among the grass the pink-lipped daisy
Raise her golden eye to greet the sun.

Young blood bounding where the herd rejoices,
Young sap bursting through the budding grove;
Streams and breezes waft their myriad voices,
Whispering, "Love is life and life is love."

'Tis no dream, this love; I have, I hold it!
Heaven itself hath joys not more divine;
Art and song and music have not told it,
Shall not tell this blessedness of mine.

What to me is rank, or wealth, or glory?
This my pride, my pleasure, and my glee,
This all-gladdening, ever-wondrous story,
That thy priceless love is given to me.

We are one, and man shall not confound us;
I have thews of steel to guard thy charms.
Fiends shall tremble while they see around us
The charmed circlet of thy ivory arms.

Cramoiseau, though so fidgety a person, did not read badly, and his tone imparted more rhythm to the love ode than perhaps it possessed. But one thing struck all these fanatical men, who were more misguided than cruel—that such verses could only have been penned by one who was seriously enamoured.

A moment's silence followed the conclusion of the ode; then the German, Hardreich, spoke. "Bah! Paul is out of his senses. He is in love. He can be of no use to us. Let him go."

"Without killing him?" asked the soft, sad Russian, who had been shedding sentimental tears, but was none the less ready for a little private execution.

"Our rules are formal," yelled the Pole Raczki.

"Every rule has its exception, though," replied the dogmatic German.

Here one of the Frenchmen, who was at heart Paul's friend, took him by the shoulders with pretended roughness and shoved him towards the door. "Out you go!" he shouted. "A pretty fellow you are, forsooth! We took you for a man, and we find you a puling baby! Off with you, and don't let us see you again!"

"Stop!" cried Cramoiseau. "I have the key; let me unlock the door. I'm sure I don't want the fellow's blood; let him go and get hanged or married, so far as I am concerned, only don't let him come athwart any of us. Do you hear what I say, Paul Brun?"

"Thank you," answered Paul, rather flurried as he saw the door opened and doubting whether he were not dreaming.

"Then begone," said the little Cramoiseau peremptorily, as he pointed to the street with quivering finger. "Remember that you are disgraced, and that we have turned you out from our society; but we shall have our eyes on you."

"That is of no consequence so long as you keep your hands off," rejoined Paul with an attempt at a joke. At heart he was rather humiliated to be treated with this ignominy, but by the time he had descended the door-step he bethought him that it is a good thing enough when a drama which threatened to end as a tragedy concludes as a farce. Nobody followed him. The door closed behind his back, and he felt that he was free.

"And I owe it all to Rose," he muttered, thinking of his verses, which one of the brethren had confiscated. "Well, now, I will go to Richmond and tell her all about it. I dare say she will laugh, and think my secret was not such a terrible one after all."

Paul Brun did go to Richmond, but on second thoughts he did not tell Rose Cherril of his heroi-comic adventure. He confined himself to assuring her, in Miss Smalway's presence, that he was free, and to asking her if she would marry him during the holidays. To the schoolmistress's speechless disgust no further explanations were vouchsafed her then or afterwards, when Rose, having become a happy wife, came to pay occasional friendly visits to Acacia House with her husband the *Mosier*.

Age of the Sun and Earth.

Raphael. The sun, as in the ancient days,
'Mong sister stars in rival song,
His destined path observes, obeys,
And still in thunder rolls along.

Gabriel. The vex'd sea foams—waves weep and moan,
And chide the rocks with insult hoarse,
And wave and rock are hurried on,
And suns and stars in endless course.—GOETHE.

WE have learned how small is our domain in space, but as yet we have scarcely been willing to admit that man's duration in time is as utterly minute, and in a sense insignificant. Yet there is scarcely a feature of our recently acquired knowledge about the relations of the earth in space, which has not its parallel in known facts respecting time and the earth's relations thereto; while the mysteries of space, as yet unfathomed and unfathomable, have their analogues in the mysteries which a thoughtful mind recognises in relation to time, as well in the remote past as in futurity. We may hereafter consider specially in these pages the parallelisms of time and space. At present we note only that the subject we have to deal with illustrates strikingly the manner in which the researches of modern science into space relations lead men to consider also the periods of time during which the objects of their research must have existed in the past and are likely to exist in the future.

In the infancy of human thought it was a sufficient explanation of the light and heat of the sun to suppose that a bright and hot body circled around the earth (or rather round the place inhabited by the observer), coming into view each day in the east, and passing over by the south towards the west. Rejoicing as a giant to run his course, never varying in his circuit round the earth, the sun was regarded either as himself a being of power, or else as representing the energy of a higher power, which had set this glowing mass in the sky, and had appointed its courses. But while on the one hand the sun was regarded as a smaller body than the earth, so unquestionably the duration of the sun was regarded as of necessity less than that of the earth. For ages this earth had endured, without form and void, cold and dark, before the sun was appointed to gladden her with his beams; and though the future was not so clear to men's minds, yet it was generally supposed that the end of the earth would not come while the sun and the moon endured.

The recognition of the vast superiority of the sun over the earth in size was not attained gradually, as some have asserted, but suddenly. The discovery came on men as a revelation. One generation had believed in a central earth, all-important in the universe, as well in space as in time. In the lifetime of the next generation the earth had descended from her high position to become one only and by no means the chief of several small bodies circling round the giant orb of the sun. No longer central in space, she could no longer be regarded reasonably as central in time; in other words, it was no longer reasonable to suppose that her formation however brought about, her progress however long-lasting, and her final end however attained, either marked the beginning, progress, and end of time, or occupied a central position in all time. We do not find that men were as ready to accept this conclusion as they had been (no choice, indeed, being left them) in accepting the earth's non-central position in space. But the inference was undoubtedly the only reasonable and probable one. The earth's history *might* no doubt occupy a central position in time, precisely as this day on which we write these lines may be exactly midway between the day when life first began on the earth, and the day when life here will finally cease. Yet, while either proposition *might* be true, one is not more wildly improbable than the other.

With regard to the sun, which had now come to be recognised as exceeding the earth more than a millionfold in size, it was an equally reasonable inference that his duration also far surpassed that of the earth. Of course the substance of either might reasonably be regarded as existent during all time; but the fashioning of the mighty orb ruling over a family of which the earth was but a small member, might reasonably be supposed to have belonged to a far more remote epoch than that of the earth, and his continuance as a sun might as reasonably be supposed likely to outlast not merely by many centuries, but many *times*, the continuance of our earth as the abode of living creatures.

Men had no positive evidence, however, on these points, so long as they considered only the dimensions of the sun and earth. It was natural to suppose—or rather it would have been natural, for as a matter of fact the supposition was not entertained—that as the duration of mankind far surpasses the duration of a nation, and as the duration of a nation far surpasses that of any individual man, so the duration of the solar system, and therefore of the ruler of the system, must far surpass that of any individual planet. But there was only one way (one general way involving many special methods) of determining whether this was actually the case or not; and the researches of men along this special line of research did not begin till long after the importance of the sun in size had been ascertained. We refer to the inquiry into the processes actually taking place in the earth, in the sun, and in the solar system, and into the evidence respecting the continuance and effects of such processes in the past. Men's ideas on some of these points were almost as

vague at the beginning of the present century (nay, even much later) as had been the thoughts of the men of old times respecting the proportions of the heavenly bodies and their orbits. We find Sir W. Herschel, for instance, adopting and enforcing a theory respecting the sun's condition, and the emission of solar light and heat, which would not account for one week's supply of such sunlight as we actually receive. Still later we find a man like Dr. Whewell, a skilful mathematician and an able physicist, who also, if not strictly speaking an astronomer, was well read in astronomy, maintaining in his *Plurality of Worlds* the theory that the fixed stars may be mere lights, not mighty masses like our sun—a theory which the modern discovery of the conservation of force shows to be utterly inconsistent with the steady emission of enormous quantities of intensely brilliant light during many thousands of years.

But now the student of science recognises in the sun's constant radiation of light and heat the existence of a store of energy which must have been in some way garnered up during long past ages. As certainly as the constant deflection of the earth from the direction in which she is moving at any moment indicates the existence of a force residing in the sun towards which body that deflection constantly takes place, so certainly does the emission of light and heat from the sun indicate the action of processes in the past by which the necessary energy has been stored up. We know that the sun cannot be the habitable orb girt round by phosphorescent cloud-masses imagined by Sir W. Herschel, any more than it can resemble the stars, as imagined by Dr. Whewell, in being a mere light without any considerable mass or substance. The working of a steam-engine does not more certainly indicate the consumption of fuel, and therefore the prior gathering together of fuel, than does the sun's radiation of light and heat imply the consumption of solar energy, and therefore the prior gathering together of stores of energy.

When this was first recognised, students of solar physics were content to inquire how the observed emission of solar light and heat could be accounted for in such a way as to explain the sun's appreciably unvarying size and mass. They perceived that to regard the sun as a mere mass of burning fuel would by no means suffice. We can measure the quantity of heat that the sun constantly emits, because we can measure the amount received by our earth, which intercepts about one-2,300,000,000th part of all the light and heat emitted by the sun. We thus find that in every second of time the sun emits as much heat as would result from the combustion of 11,600 billions of tons of coal. In passing, it may be convenient to notice that each portion of the sun's surface as large as our earth emits as much heat per second as would result from the combustion of a billion tons of coal—a simple and easily remembered relation. Now it is easily calculated from this that if the sun's whole mass consisted of coal, and could burn right out to the last ton, maintaining till then the present rate of emission, the supply would not last more than 5,000 years. As the sun has most certainly been

emitting light and heat for a far longer period than this, the idea that the solar fire is thus maintained is of course altogether untenable. There are, however, many other reasons for rejecting the idea that the sun is composed of burning matter, using the word "burning" in its proper sense, according to which a piece of coal in a fire is burning, whereas a piece of red-hot iron is not burning, though burning hot. In like manner we find ourselves compelled to reject the belief that the sun may be a body, raised at some remote epoch to an intense heat throughout its entire mass, and gradually cooling. For we find that in the course of a few thousands of years such a mass would cool far more than the sun has cooled (if he has cooled appreciably at all) even within the historic period; and we have evidence that he has poured his heat on the earth during periods compared with which the duration of the human race is but as a second amid centuries, while the duration of historic races is utterly lost by comparison.

This brings us to the consideration of evidence which has only in quite recent times been brought to bear on the question of the sun's age.

We know from records left by men of old times that the sun was in their time very much what he is now, though we cannot be altogether certain that he gave out exactly the same amount of light and heat, or even almost exactly the same. Again, from the remains of animals and plants in the earth's crust we can deduce similar inferences. Those animals and plants could not have existed unless the sun had supplied light and heat as at present, though we cannot assert so confidently that he supplied the same amount of either. The possible range of variation may have been greater, so far as evidence of this kind is concerned, than in the case where we have human records for our guidance. But there is other evidence which, while less exact still as to the actual emission of light and heat, ranges over periods of time far greater than could be directly inferred from the examination of fossil fauna or flora. As yet we are not able to form satisfactory estimates of the periods of time necessary to bring about such and such changes in the various races of plants and animals; hence, although we may be quite sure that enormous time-intervals must have elapsed before the races whose remains only are found became changed into the races which are their modern representatives, we cannot definitely assign the duration of these time-intervals, or even at present make the roughest approximation to their length. But there are changes depending on the sun's action whose rate of progress we can satisfactorily measure. We know that processes of change are caused on the earth's surface by the downfall of rain and snow, by the action of frost and ice, of winds and waves, by chemical action, by processes of vegetation, and other causes, all depending on solar activity. Geologists no longer assign the existing irregularities of the earth's crust to causes other than those at present at work, or even suppose that, within the range of time over which their researches extend, causes such as these acted much more actively than they do at present. But it may be noted

in passing, that, so far as those causes of change are concerned which depend on solar action, it will not greatly affect the argument now to be brought before the reader, whether we consider the activity of such causes to have been widely variable in the past, or to have been appreciably uniform. For it will be seen that the chief difficulty we shall have to encounter resides in the necessity of explaining the total amount of solar radiation in the past. If, in order to shorten the time-intervals indicated by those features of the earth's crust which depend on causes of change due to solar action, we imagine those causes to have once operated far more actively than at present, we necessarily assume that the sun's action was far more intense then than now. We manifestly gain nothing so far as this special difficulty is concerned, if we have to enhance our conceptions of the solar radiation in the same degree that we reduce our estimate of the time during which his rays have been at work upon the earth.

But in reality we are not free to imagine any very noteworthy change in the conditions under which the earth's surface has undergone change during the greater part of the time over which geological researches extend. For there is evidence proving that the progress of changes in the past must have resembled that taking place at the present time. Consider, for instance, the evidence afforded by the various strata which have been deposited at the bottom of the sea. In these strata are the remains of creatures which formerly existed in the sea; and we find these remains in such a condition in many instances as to prove, beyond all possibility of doubt or question, that, unless those creatures were *much* more short-lived than their present representatives, the average rate of deposition must have closely resembled that now recognised in similar seas. As Lyell remarks: "When we see thousands of full-grown shells dispersed everywhere throughout a long series of strata, we cannot doubt that time was required for the multiplication of successive generations; and the evidence of slow accumulation is rendered more striking from the proofs, so often discovered, of fossil bodies having lain for a time on the floor of ocean after death before they were imbedded in sediment. Nothing, for example, is more common than to see fossil oysters in clay, with serpulæ, or barnacles (acorn-shells), or corals, and other creatures, attached to the inside of the valves, so that the mollusk was certainly not buried in mud at the moment it died. There must have been an interval during which it was still surrounded with clear water, when the creatures whose remains now adhere to it grew to a mature state." Nay, there are cases where we have evidence of still slower deposition than could be thus inferred. For we often find that the creature which has attached itself to the shells of defunct mollusks have not only grown to maturity before the shells were covered with deposited matter, but have in their turn died and their hard coverings have been slowly pierced by other creatures, while still the deposit had not covered the shell of the mollusk to half its thickness.

It may appear at first sight that evidence about the rate of deposition of mud at the bottom of the sea does not bear very obviously on the question of the sun's radiation of light and heat. But it must be remembered that this deposition of matter measures the rate at which matter has been carried away from the earth's surface above the sea-level; while the rate at which this process—or what is called "sub-aërial denudation"—takes place, depends on the downfall of rain and snow, the action of wind and storms, and other causes depending on the energy of the solar rays.

We may turn, then, with sufficient confidence to the evidence which the earth's crust affords respecting the time during which the solar radiation has continued. We certainly are not likely to obtain an estimate in excess of the truth, apart altogether from the consideration that there may have been, and most probably were, enormous periods of time during which the sun's rays were poured on the earth without producing any effects which can now be recognised, and most probably still more enormous periods before the earth had a crust at all, when the solar radiation was already intensely active.

The evidence derived from the earth's crust, however, will be found sufficiently striking, without our entering into the consideration of possibilities relating to preceding eras. "When we reflect," says Mr. James Croll, whose researches into this and related subjects are full of interest, "that with such extreme slowness do these agents" (rain, snow, ice, running water, &c.) "perform their work, that we might, if we could, watch their operations from year to year, and from century to century, without being able to perceive that they make any sensible impression, we are necessitated to conclude that geological periods must be enormous."

Let us follow Mr. Croll in his consideration of a few of the many facts bearing on this point. (Much that immediately follows here is simply translated into popular language from a very interesting article by Mr. Croll in the *Quarterly Journal of Science* for July, 1877.)

It is well known that many parts of the earth's surface which now show no marked inequalities were formerly the scene of great dislocations (not necessarily produced suddenly), when the surface on one side of the line of dislocation had been depressed hundreds or even thousands of feet below the surface on the other side of that line. On the present surface no signs of these tremendous displacements (whether produced by upheaval or by sinking, or by both) can now in general be recognised, the inequalities having been all removed by denudation. But to effect this levelling, a mass of rock must have been removed equal in thickness to the extent of the dislocation. If we can ascertain the full depth of the stratum thus removed, and also the average rate at which denudation takes place, we shall have a measure of the length of time required for the levelling process. Only, at the outset, we must remember, first, that an estimate thus formed is likely to fall far short of the truth, even

as respects the particular process involved; and, secondly, that that process is in itself but one in a series of such processes. We learn from a fault, as a dislocation of this kind is called, how much more has been denuded on one side than on the other to restore the level; but not how much has also been taken from both sides. Again, where a fault of this kind occurs, the strata which have undergone the process of dislocation are commonly themselves the products of denudation from other surfaces existing, of course, long before the dislocation occurred. And these surfaces in their turn were probably the results of slow processes of deposition of matter denuded from still earlier surfaces.

To consider, however, a few examples of extensive faults.

Professor Ramsay, describing some of the remarkable faults in North Wales, states that near Snowdon there is a fault where the displacement of the strata amounts to 5,000 feet, and in the Berwyn Hills one of 5,000 feet; in the Aran range occurs the Bala fault, with a downthrow of 7,000 feet. Between Aran Mowddwy and Careg Aderyn the displacement is between 10,000 and 11,000 feet. "Here we have evidence," says Mr. Croll, "that a mass of rock, varying from one mile to two miles in vertical thickness, must have been denuded in many places from the surface of the country in North Wales."

"Along the flank of the Grampians a great fault runs from the North Sea at Stonehaven to the estuary of the Clyde, throwing the old red sandstone on end sometimes for a distance of two miles from the line of dislocation." Professor Geikie concludes that the amount of displacement must be in some places not less than 5,000 feet.

But perhaps the most remarkable instance known is that of the great fault which crosses Scotland from near Dunbar to the Ayrshire coast. On the south side of this fault we find the ancient silurian rocks, north of it the less ancient rocks, the old red sandstone and carboniferous of North Scotland.* The amount of dislocation is in some places fully 15,000 feet, or nearly three miles. Now, it is to be observed that the dislocation is older than the carboniferous era. For originally the silurian rocks south of the fault must have been covered by the prolongation of the old red sandstone, afterwards completely removed by denudation. If the carboniferous strata had then existed, they, lying uppermost, would, of course, have been washed away first. But we find them on the south side of the fault, lying immediately on the old silurian floor, the old red sandstone which originally covered that floor having been entirely removed. Thus the "enormous thickness of nearly

* It is absolutely necessary here, and in what follows, to use these technical geological terms. For the subject of our present inquiry it will suffice to say that the carboniferous rocks are later than the old red sandstone (at least in any given geological district), the old red sandstone later than the silurian, while the Laurentian rocks, mentioned further on, are older yet than the silurian. Of course the oldest rocks lie lowest.

three miles of old red sandstone must have been denuded away during the period which intervened between" its deposition and the subsequent accumulation of the carboniferous limestone and the coal measures now lying directly on the silurian rocks!

One other case to indicate the enormous periods required for the formation of some of the features of Scottish scenery.

Professor Geikie has shown that "the Pentlands must at one time have been covered with upwards of a mile in thickness of carboniferous rocks, which have all been removed by denudation." "Now," says Mr. Croll, "the Pentlands themselves, it can be proved, existed as hills in much their present form before the carboniferous rocks were laid down over them; and as they are of lower old red sandstone age, and have been formed by denudation, they must consequently have been carved out of the solid rock between the period of the old red sandstone and the beginning of the carboniferous age."

But, in order fully to appreciate the vastness of the periods required for these and kindred changes, it is necessary to recognise the extreme slowness with which such changes proceed.

The first calculations directed to the solution of this difficult problem were those made by Manfredi in 1736. In 1802 Playfair took up the inquiry. But the materials available at that time were so imperfect that these earlier calculations were not satisfactory. In 1850 Tylor, from a careful investigation of the evidence respecting the quantity of matter brought down by rivers into the sea, deduced the conclusion that 10,000 years would be required to raise the sea level by three inches. More recently Mr. Croll, from the latest measurement of the sediment transported by European and American rivers, calculated the rate at which the surface of the land is being denuded. "The conclusion arrived at in his able memoir," says Sir Charles Lyell, "was that the whole terrestrial surface is denuded at the rate of one foot in 6,000 years; and this opinion was simultaneously enforced by his fellow-labourer, Mr. Geikie." This was in 1868.

It may be well, before considering the bearing of these researches on the subject presently before us—the obliteration of the effects of dislocations in the earth's crust—to quote the opinion of Sir Charles Lyell on this method of dealing with the general problem of terrestrial denudation. "It is evident," he says, "that when we know the dimensions of the area which is drained, and the annual quantity of earthy matter taken from it and borne into the sea, we can affirm how much on an average has been removed from the general surface in one year; and there seems no danger of our overrating the mean rate of waste by selecting" (as Mr. Croll and Geikie had done) "the Mississippi as our example. For that river drains a country equal to more than half the continent of Europe, extends through twenty degrees of latitude, and therefore through regions enjoying a great variety of climate; and some of its tributaries descend from mountains of great height. The Missis-

sippi is also more likely to afford us a fair test of ordinary denudation, because, unlike the St. Lawrence and its tributaries, there are no great lakes in which the fluviatile sediment is thrown down and arrested on its way to the sea. In striking a general average we have to remember that there are large deserts in which there is scarcely any rainfall, and tracts which are as rainless as parts of Peru; and these must not be neglected as counterbalancing others in the tropics where the quantity of rain is in excess. If then, argues Mr. Geikie, we assume that the Mississippi is lowering the surface of the great basin which it drains at the rate of one foot in 6,000 years, 10 feet in 60,000 years, 100 feet in 600,000 years, and 1,000 feet in 6,000,000 years, it would not require more than about 4,500,000 years to wear away the whole of the North American continent if its mean height is correctly estimated by Humboldt at 748 feet; and if the mean height of all the land now above the sea throughout the globe is 1,000 feet, as some geographers believe, it would only require 6,000,000 years to subject a mass of rock equal in volume to the whole of the land to the action of sub-aërial denudation. It may be objected that the annual waste is partial, and not equally derived from the general level of the country, inasmuch as plains, watersheds, and level ground at all heights remain comparatively unaltered; but this, as Mr. Geikie has well pointed out, does not affect our estimate of the sum total of denudation. The amount remains the same; and if we allow too little for the loss from the surface of table-lands, we only increase the proportion of the loss sustained by the sides and bottoms of the valleys, and *vice versâ*."

We may note, in passing, that, adopting the estimated rate of denudation here indicated, the actual time required for the entire submergence of the present continents, if no vulcanian forces were at work to prevent submergence, would not necessarily be even approximately represented by the period of 6,000,000 years mentioned above. At the outset the rate of submergence would be greater than the mere rate of denudation, since every foot removed from the surface of the continents would cause a rise of about $4\frac{2}{3}$ inches in the level of the sea; so that at first the surface of continents would be lowered on the average not one foot only in 6,000 years, *with respect to the sea-level*, but 1 foot $4\frac{2}{3}$ inches. On the other hand, as the continents became greatly reduced in extent, it is probable that the average annual rate of denudation would be diminished, the portions still remaining above the sea-level being of harder and more durable material than those which had been removed. We need not inquire further, however, into the question here raised, which, though suggested by our subject, does not, strictly speaking, belong to it; moreover, in nature the process considered cannot take place, the earth's internal forces constantly restoring the balance between land and water by the upheaval of submerged regions.

For the purpose of our present inquiry the action of the earth's vulcanian energies need not be considered; because we are concerned

only with the question how long would be the period of time required for the removal of a stratum so many hundreds or thousands of feet in thickness. We know, certainly, that, in the special cases we have to deal with, strata of such and such thickness were removed; and it matters little whether, as the process of removal went on, they were being steadily raised by the earth's subterranean action, or whether the original dislocation was followed by the sudden raising of the strata at one side of the fault and their equally sudden lowering on the other side. However the difference was brought about, it is certain that the raised strata were worn down eventually by the steady action of the same causes which wear down the general surface of the large continents. Having ascertained the average rate at which these causes work, we can apply the result to determine how long they would be in producing the observed levelling down of the upraised strata in faults. There is no reason for supposing that in the remote past the process would go on more quickly than at the present time. And we have seen that even if it did, that would imply a greater activity in the solar energies to which these processes are all in reality due, so that our difficulty would be in no way diminished by any such assumption. The time required would be reduced by a few millions of years perhaps; but the difficulty we are dealing with is not a question of time at all. We are inquiring now into the amount of the total expenditure of solar energies in past ages; and the time-intervals indicated by the earth's crust are only of importance in so far as they show how vast that expenditure of energy has been. Doubtless, in considering other questions, the length of these time-intervals is a question of great interest, but it does not directly concern us here.

Let us, however, follow Mr. Croll in recognising the possibility that, in some of the cases we have to deal with, the rate of denudation may have been greater than the average rate inferred from the consideration of river drainage. To prevent the possibility of over-estimating the periods necessary to effect the observed denudation, let us assume the rate to have been double the average rate, or equal to one foot in 3,000 years.

At this rate a thickness of three miles which (*at the very least*) has been swept away in South Scotland since the old red sandstone period would require 45 million years!

But, older than the old red sandstone rocks, the silurian formations have been denuded in places to depths of thousands of feet before the old red sandstone strata were deposited. And these ancient formations were themselves deposited in the ocean by the slow denudation of the Cambrian rocks. These in turn had been formed from the earlier Laurentian strata. And lastly (so far as the researches of geologists at present extend), the Laurentian rocks themselves were built up from the ruins of other rocks which were themselves sedimentary rocks, not the actual primary rocks of our globe. We should almost certainly

under-estimate the period required for these processes of denudation preceding the old red sandstone era, if we assumed that it was only equal in length to the period which has elapsed since that era. But making this assumption, and assuming also (which is also almost certainly an under estimate) that the interval which has elapsed since the old red sandstone era is 45 million years, we find a total of 90 million years for the stratified rocks. In other words, we find at least 90 million years for the period during which rain has fallen on the earth as at present. During that time, therefore, the sun has poured his rays upon the ocean, raising up their waters by evaporation to be carried by winds (also generated by the sun) over the continents, and there discharged in the form of rain and snow.

It may be noticed, in passing, that Sir William Thomson infers, from the observed underground temperature of our earth, that the consolidation of the crust cannot have taken place less than 20 million years ago, or the underground temperature would have been greater than it is; nor more than 400 million years ago, or the underground temperature would have been less than it is. The limits are rather wide; but a value well within these limits would accord with Mr. Croll's estimate of 90 million years as the interval since the earliest stratified rocks were deposited.

Now, the difficulty thus raised is this:—At present we know of no way in which the sun could have emitted the same amount of heat as at present for anything like this period of 90 million years, without having shrunk to much smaller dimensions than he at present has.

It is generally admitted by physicists and astronomers that the solar heat has had its origin in the main, almost wholly in fact, in processes of contraction; and that it is maintained by such processes. In other words, the gravitation of the sun's mass has given birth to all, or very nearly all, the heat which the sun has emitted in the past, and will continue to emit till the end of his career as a sun. It was once supposed that meteoric downfall on the sun's surface produced the chief share of the solar heat. The idea has now been generally abandoned for reasons into which we need not here enter. But, practically, it is of no importance whether we consider the sun's heat to have been generated by the downfall of masses on his surface (continually fed by such downfall) or by the gradual contraction of the entire mass now constituting his globe, till it had assumed its present dimensions. This is the accepted form of the gravitation theory of the solar heat.

But manifestly, the greatest possible amount of heat which could have been generated in this way would be that produced by the contraction of a great nebulous mass containing all the sun's present substance, from an original extension throughout an infinitely large space to the present dimensions of the sun. It might be supposed, perhaps, that the result of such a process of contraction would be the generation of an infinite amount of heat. But in reality this is not the

case, any more than it is the case that a meteoric mass allowed to fall from an infinite distance upon the sun would strike his surface with infinite velocity (after a journey lasting an infinite time—which, however, is a mere detail). We know, on the contrary, the rate at which such a mass would strike the sun—namely, about 360 miles per second. And precisely as we can calculate the velocity of such a mass after being subjected to the sun's pull over an infinitely long journey, so we can calculate the total amount of heat which would result from the contraction of the sun's mass to its present dimensions from a former extension throughout infinite space. We find that it corresponds only to about 20 million years' supply at his present rate of emission.

Thus, while the earth seems to tell us that the sun has been pouring his rays upon her at the same rate as at present during at least 90 million years, the sun seems to tell us that he has not been pouring out heat at that rate for more than 20 million years.

Even if we reject the earth's evidence, or if we endeavour to show that the rainfalls by which the earth's surface has been again and again denuded were not always due to solar heat, but may have been generated by the earth's own heat, we scarcely find our difficulty removed. For it seems utterly absurd to suppose that the mighty central orb of the solar system only attained its present activity during the comparatively recent years of the history of our earth, one of the smaller and shorter-lived members of the sun's family. Sir W. Thomson has shown, by the most satisfactory of the three methods he employed to *shorten* the estimates formed respecting the earth's duration, that more than 20 million years must have elapsed since her crust was formed—a time which certainly followed by many millions of years the actual genesis of the earth as a gaseous mass. Many physicists reject even the 400 million years given by Thomson as the superior limit, doubting whether the formulæ and data he employed could be relied upon as confidently as the various processes of mathematical calculation which he applied to them. But even if we accept his minimum result—certainly the very least which science will permit us to accept—it would still follow that the sun's present emission of light and heat could not have continued throughout the time of our earth's existence as a planet; *if* the sun's heat had its origin entirely or chiefly in those processes of contraction combined with meteoric indraught in which astronomers and physicists at present believe, *and if the space into which the sun's mass has contracted is really that which the sun we see appears to occupy.*

Mr. Croll, who passes over the latter consideration with the remark that if the sun's density increases towards the centre the supply of solar heat might be somewhat greater, suggests, as the true explanation of the difficulty, that the sun may have derived a portion of his energies in another way than merely through the process of contraction. "In proving that the antiquity of our habitable globe may be far greater than 20 or 30 million years, we prove," he says, "that there must have

been some other source in addition to gravity from which the sun derived his store of energy."

He goes back to the initial state of things conceived by Laplace in presenting what is usually called the nebular hypothesis of the solar system. According to this, the whole of the solar system was formerly a great gaseous mass; but whether cold or hot Laplace did not say. As Helmholtz remarks, "The chemical forces must have been present, and ready to act; but, as these forces could only come into operation by the most intimate contact of the different masses, condensation must have taken place before the play of chemical forces began: whether a still further supply of force in the shape of heat was present at the commencement we do not know." Mr. Croll, who regards the chemical forces as equivalent only to a few thousand years' supply of heat, and, therefore, as comparatively insignificant, thinks we may safely infer that the original nebulous mass was intensely heated, and that in such intense heat we may find the explanation of the problem before us. "It is evident," he says, "that if we admit that the nebulous mass was in a state of incandescence prior to condensation, it will really be difficult to fix any limit either to the age of the sun, or to the amount of heat which it may have originally possessed. The 20 million years' heat obtained by condensation may in such a case be but a small fraction of the total quantity possessed by the mass."

But then the question arises, Whence did the nebulous mass derive its heat? Mr. Croll considers that we may find a satisfactory answer to this question in the assumption that the nebulous mass was formed by the collision of two bodies, each of half the mass of the sun, rushing full tilt upon each other with a velocity of nearly 500 miles per second. Their concussion would generate enough heat to last more than 50 millions of years, which we should have to add to the 20 millions of years provided for by the subsequent condensation of the mass. He asks: "Why may not the sun have been composed of two such bodies? and why may not the original store of heat possessed by him have all been derived from the concussion of these two bodies? Two such bodies coming into collision with that velocity would be dissipated into vapour and converted into a nebulous mass by such an inconceivable amount of heat as would thus be generated; and when condensation on cooling took place, a spherical mass like that of the sun would result."

It will be asked, Mr. Croll says (and certainly it seems likely), "Where did the two bodies get their velocity?" It may as well be asked, he answers, "Where did they get their existence? It is just as easy to conceive that they always existed in motion as to conceive that they always existed at rest." At first sight it might seem a fair rejoinder to this to say that, if we are free to assign these enormous velocities to bodies in space, we must be free also to assign to them other properties such as matter can possess—heat, for instance: so that we might solve our problem at once by saying that the nebulous mass was originally

supplied with enough heat to last fifty, a hundred, or a thousand millions of years. But there is a difference between motion and heat. Masses of matter might be rushing hither and thither through space for ever, without change, except when collisions occurred; whereas masses intensely hot must radiate their heat away. So that while we can, as Mr. Croll truly says, conceive the existence of bodies in motion for any length of time we please, we cannot conceive the constant existence of an intensely-heated nebulous or other mass. It *must* lose heat; whereas the bodies rushing about through space need not lose motion, and certainly would not do so unless they came into collision.

Nor is Mr. Croll's position affected by the argument that neither our own sun nor the other suns which people space are rushing about with anything like these velocities of four, five, or six hundred miles per second. For all the stars are glowing with intense light and heat, and therefore must be regarded as bodies which, like our sun (according to this theory), have been formed by mighty collisions, in which their motion was converted into light and heat. The stars, therefore, are bodies which have already lost the greater part of their original velocities, and the comparatively small velocities left them are precisely what, according to this theory, we might expect.

Yet, while an answer may be found to some of the more obvious arguments against this startling theory, it must be admitted that the theory remains surrounded by difficulties of an almost insuperable nature.

Without entering into calculations which would be out of place in these pages, we may state that the imagined collisions of bodies rushing hither and thither, even with the enormous velocities suggested, through stellar space, would resemble in frequency, or rather in paucity, collisions between bullets in an engagement between two very widely scattered parties of skirmishers. At a rate of 500 miles per second (possessed by *each*), two bodies as far apart as our own sun and his nearest neighbour among the stars, would meet each other (if their motion were suitably directed) in about 700 years. Supposing a million stars, scattered as stars are now scattered, were to rush in a flight to meet a million stars similarly scattered, at the rate just mentioned, a million years or so would elapse before the two flights had rushed through each other, and the chances would be many millions to one against even a single collision occurring. Such bodies would have to be strewn far more densely through space than the stars are to make it probable that among several millions of them one collision would occur in a million years. As the supply of light and heat resulting from each collision would not last more than 50 or 60 millions of years on the average, only fifty or sixty stars would be visible at any given moment among all those millions of bodies. So that for each star shining in that region of space (and the same reasoning applies to the whole of the stellar universe) there would be millions of dark bodies. Of these a certain proportion,

probably very small, would consist of orbs which had undergone collision, had shone for 50, 60, or say 100 millions of years, and were now dead suns. The rest of the dark bodies, outnumbering the visible stars millions of times, would be bodies which had not yet encountered others after the fashion which the theory requires. These would be dangerous fellows. They might at any time come into collision either with each other, making new suns, or with suns already glowing, making these suns glow a great deal more brightly, and destroying the inhabitants of any worlds circling around them. Moreover, we ought, in the course of comparatively short periods, to see such new stars suddenly begin their existence as vaporous masses glowing with an intensely bright light. Now, nothing in the least corresponding to the process of sun-formation required by this theory has ever been observed. The so-called new stars are not at all what the theory requires. They have shone with intense brightness for a few months at the outside, and have then died out; but according to the theory we require stars which shall burn with steady fires for many millions of years. Now, we might reasonably expect that for some short time following its first formation, a new sun would shine much more brightly than afterwards. Mr. Croll, indeed, supposes otherwise, his line of argument as to new stars (presently to be noticed) assuming that after a collision a star would immediately begin the steady emission of light and heat at about the rate at which it would continue to emit them afterwards: but a collision in which the supply of heat and light for 100 millions of years was generated in a moment would unquestionably produce also a great temporary outburst. Those new stars, however, which astronomers have been able to observe since the spectroscope was invented, have not behaved in the required manner. (As a friend of ours is apt to say when observation does not accord with theory, "They didn't know, poor things, what they were expected to do.") One was found to be a star already recorded in star-maps, and has faded to its original lustre; the other, after shining for awhile as a bright star, has faded into a faint nebula or star-cloud.

Mr. Croll reasons thus as to the probable number of new stars which would be formed according to his theory:—"The formation of a sun by collision is an event that would not be likely to escape observation if it occurred within the limits of visibility in space. But such an event must be of very rare occurrence, or the number of stars visible would be far greater than it is. The number of stars registered down to the seventh magnitude inclusive, is, according to Herschel, somewhere between 12,000 and 15,000, and this is all that can possibly be seen by the naked eye. Now, if we suppose each of them to shine like our sun for (say) 100 million years, then one formed in every 7,000 or 8,000 years would maintain the present number undiminished. But this is the number included in both hemispheres, so that the occurrence of an event of such unparallelled splendour and magnificence as the formation of a star, or rather nebula—for this would be the form first assumed—is

what can only be expected to be seen in our hemisphere once in about 15,000 years. The absence of any historical record of such an event having ever occurred can, therefore, be no evidence whatever against the theory." If, however, as may most reasonably be assumed, the formation of a sun in this way would be in the first instance accompanied by a most tremendous outburst of light and heat, far exceeding that which the body in its ultimate condition as a sun would emit, then we should be able to recognise the formation of any such sun within the region of space over which our telescopes range; and in that region of space there are more like a hundred million than twelve or fifteen thousand stars. An outburst ought to be recognised, on the average, about once a year; and certainly new suns are not entering on the first stage of their existence at this rate.

Moreover, apart from what we have mentioned above as to the duration of so-called new stars, what is known about one at least of the two new stars which have appeared during the last twelve years, by no means accords with what we should expect if the outburst were caused by the collision of two other suns, or of two dark masses rushing along at the rate of four or five hundred miles per second. One of them was found not to be a new star at all. It was simply a tenth-magnitude star which had suddenly acquired the brightness of a second-magnitude star. It rapidly lost its new lustre, returning to the brightness which it had had before the outburst. The other—the new star which appeared in the constellation Cygnus in November, 1876—did behave in a manner reconcilable in some degree with Mr. Croll's theory. For, while no star had been known to exist where this star suddenly appeared, the new star, after shining for awhile with light resembling in character that emitted by other stars, gradually, as it lost its light, assumed a nebulous character, and is at this moment shining with light of precisely the same kind as is emitted by the gaseous masses called (from their appearance) planetary nebulæ. It would be rather rash, however, to assume that here was a case where two orbs rushing through space had encountered full tilt, and after a certain time, during which the heat excited by their collision had been reducing their substance to vapour, the entire mass had become a nebula. If we are to suppose that dark, hard masses produce suns by their collision, we enormously increase the chances against collision, because we enormously reduce the dimensions of the bodies supposed to be travelling through space. Returning to our illustration from a battle-field, it is as though each bullet were reduced in size to the thousandth part of the smallest of small shot.

There is, moreover, this inherent difficulty in the theory thus presented, that if the heat resulting from collision vapourises the entire mass, making a mighty nebula out of which in the course of many millions of years a solar system is to form, by far the greater part of this heat will be radiated away into space while the nebula is passing through the mere beginning of the process of contraction, and ages before a single

member of the future solar system has assumed the form of a habitable world. The total amount of energy corresponding to the collision, if it could all be kept in stock, so to speak, till the time that the members of the system were fully fashioned, might suffice for as many millions of years as we find that our earth has actually been exposed to the rays of the sun. But there is no conceivable way in which the supply could thus be reserved till it was wanted. While a nebulous mass was contracting, it would be expending most of the heat equivalent to each successive stage of contraction. Of course, as regards the contraction due to cooling—that is, to the emission of heat—every part of such contraction would be exactly compensated by loss of heat. But the contraction due to gravitation, the only part of the process of contraction by which heat would in any sense be generated, would cause from the beginning a steady emission of heat; and whether the total rate of such emission were greater or less in the earlier stages than now, it is certain that the duration of those earlier stages would enormously exceed—say, rather, would exceed many hundreds of times—the period which has elapsed since first rain fell upon this earth, or winds blew over its surface.*

It appears to us that the true explanation of the difficulty (the first full recognition of which we owe to Mr. Croll) must be sought elsewhere. Apart from the fatal objection considered in the last paragraph, a theory involving the genesis of all the millions of existent stars from accidental collisions among millions of millions (for fewer would not suffice) of dark masses, constantly rushing through space at the rate of many hundreds of miles per second, is not one which can find acceptance among those who are acquainted with the actual present position of stellar research. But the difficulty indicated by Mr. Croll remains to be encountered. *Somewhere* the premisses must be wrong which lead to an erroneous conclusion.

Now, we are not disposed to question the validity of the reasoning which Mr. Croll and other geologists have based on the condition of the earth's crust. The only way of diminishing our estimate of the time-interval necessary for the stratification of the earth is to assume (as we find Professor Kirkwood does) that in former ages the stratification proceeded more rapidly than at present. But, as we have already seen, this amounts really to the assumption that in former ages the sun exerted a more powerful action upon the earth than at present; and we are in

* This paragraph was already written when we received from Professor Kirkwood of Bloomington, Indiana, U.S. (one of the most ingenious and original astronomers of the day), a paper in which he presents the same general argument. The conclusion at which he arrives is that much the greater part of the supply of heat "must have been radiated into space before the planets were separated from the solar mass, and consequently that the amount of geological time cannot to any great extent have exceeded the limits indicated by the researches of Sir W. Thomson." The latter inference, as will be seen, does not appear to us to be made out; but the former seems unquestionably correct.

no way helped, because it is the totality of the sun's action on the earth with which we are in reality alone concerned.

We revert, then, to the original proposition of the difficulty, to see whether there may not be any other way of escape. It appears that if the sun has contracted into his present dimensions from a nebula originally extending far beyond the orbit of Neptune, the supply of solar heat would not have lasted anything near the time during which we know, from the study of our own earth, that the supply has lasted. We have assumed all along that the sun's dimensions are those which the sun actually presents to the eye. May not our mistake lie here? May not the sun—or, rather, the chief portion of his mass—have contracted in reality to far smaller dimensions than he appears to possess?

Not many years ago, a question of this sort would have appeared altogether fanciful. But facts have been ascertained in the last few years which have greatly altered our ideas respecting the sun. It is quite certain that the sun we see is not the whole sun. It is, in a sense, a mere accident that we see the sun as he actually appears. If our eyesight were of a somewhat different quality, we should see the sierra which surrounds the entire globe of the sun to a depth of five or six thousand miles; thus we should see a much larger sun. With a yet further change of visual power we should recognise the inner corona, and the sun would appear yet larger. And we can quite readily conceive the possibility of the outer corona being discerned; in which case the sun would not merely appear larger, but many times larger than he is at present. It would, indeed, be possible to see the sun thus enormously enlarged without any change in our visual powers, if our standpoint were somewhat altered and (a slight but necessary detail) if we could exist under the new conditions. From the moon's surface, an observer possessing visual powers such as ours, and capable of existing without air or water, would see all those solar appendages which are concealed from our view (except during total solar eclipse) by a veil of sunlit air.

Now, precisely as it is conceivable that by a change in our visual powers or in the conditions under which we observe the sun, we might see him occupying (as he really does, for the corona is a part of him) a region of space many times larger than that occupied by the sun we see, so it is conceivable that the sun we see occupies a region of space many times larger than that occupied by the true mass of the sun. In the same sense in which we say now that the sun's volume is that indicated by the visible surface of the sun, because the mass of all which lies outside that surface is as nothing compared with the mass which lies within it, it may well be that the true globe of the sun lies far within the glowing surface we see, the entire mass of matter lying outside such much smaller true globe being insignificant compared with the mass forming that globe.

This is not a mere hypothesis, devised to meet the difficulty indicated by Mr. Croll. That it does meet that difficulty will be obvious if we

consider that the difficulty depends entirely on the observed present largeness of the sun's diameter. If the diameter were one-half its supposed length, the estimated duration of the emission of heat would be doubled; if the diameter were one-third its supposed length, the duration of the emission would be trebled; and so on. The density of the solar globe would be increased in much greater degree. With a diameter reduced one-half, the density would be increased eightfold; while if the diameter were reduced to one-third its present (seeming) length, the density would be increased twenty-seven times. Now, whether it be permissible to assume that the sun's globe could have a mean density many times greater than that usually assigned to it, there can be no manner of doubt that this supposed mean density is very much less than the known conditions under which the sun's mass exists would lead us to expect. The mean density of the sun is only one-fourth the mean density of our earth, while the pressures existing in the sun's interior are thousands of times greater than those inside our earth. True, the sun's temperature is enormous, and thus an expansive power exists throughout the sun's mass which would readily overcome such contractile forces as exist within the earth's frame. But the pressures produced within the sun by gravity are so tremendous that the elastic forces of the gaseous materials of the sun's globe must be quite incompetent to resist the contractile tendency. The proof that this is so is found in the constant emission of solar heat, which represents in reality the yielding of the solar mass to the influence of its own gravitating energies.

We approach here the consideration of relations such as we are entirely unable to understand or even conceive. No experimental researches we can make can throw any trustworthy light on the condition of the sun's interior, where pressures far surpassing any we are familiar with contend with temperatures equally surpassing the fiercest heat known to us on earth. It is probable that the entire mass of the sun, whatever its real extension, is gaseous; for the heat of all the materials of that mass is greater than the critical temperature of the densest elements—that temperature at which no pressure, however great, would liquefy or solidify them. If at this tremendous temperature and at the enormous pressures to which they are exposed the constituents of the solar globe were perfect gases, there would be no limit to the density they would attain in the sun's interior. But we have every reason to believe that after a certain density had been attained under pressure, these gases would no longer behave as perfect gases, their density increasing with pressure. And we find it difficult to imagine that gaseous matter could under any pressure, however great, acquire a density exceeding many times that of the elements we chiefly see in the solid form. Yet it would be unsafe to assume any limits to the density which might be attained under constantly increasing pressure by matter maintained always at so tremendous a temperature that it was prevented from becoming liquid or solid.

If we inquire what seems suggested by the actual available evidence respecting the sun's condition, inside that glowing globular surface which conceals from us all that lies within, we find reason to believe that the sun's interior is thus enormously compressed. It can readily be shown that if the sun's mass is not thus compressed, then, rotating at the observed rate, his globe should be flattened to an extent which should be recognisable by the best methods of modern measurement. The flattening, be it understood, would still be very small. It might even escape observation, so small would it be; but the probability is that it would have been detected. On the other hand, if the sun's interior is exceedingly dense, then the flattening of his globe would certainly not be observable. Since, as a matter of fact, no flattening has been observed, the probability is that the sun is enormously compressed near the centre. It must be admitted that this part of the evidence is not very strong; but, such as it is, it bears in the direction indicated.

Strangely enough, we derive from a different orb the strongest evidence on this particular point. Jupiter's mean density is the same as the sun's, if we take the visible disc of Jupiter as indicating the true size of the planet. Now it has been shown by Mr. George Darwin (from a careful comparison of the motions of Jupiter's moons with those calculated on the assumption that Jupiter's mass is not greatly compressed at the centre) that Jupiter must be very much denser at the centre than near the visible surface of his globe. This agrees with all that is known respecting that planet. We have pointed out, on former occasions, in these pages, how utterly impossible it is to explain the phenomena presented by the giant planet, on the assumption that the disc we see and measure is the true globe of Jupiter. Mr. Darwin's reasoning proves in another way that this globe lies far within the apparent outline of the planet, which in reality represents probably the region where lie the feathery clouds forming his outermost cloud-layer. Within it lie other cloud-layers, and an atmosphere of exceeding depth. Nay, it is probable that the greater part, if not the entire mass, of each of the planets Jupiter and Saturn exists at so intense a heat (though the cloud-envelopes we see are not intensely hot) that solidification and liquefaction are impossible at any pressure, however great. In this case the density of the internal parts of these planets, as of the internal parts of the sun, would be due to the vastness of the pressures exerted upon the nuclear regions.

Without insisting on this, let it simply be noted that in the case of Jupiter and Saturn it has been to all intents and purposes demonstrated that the condensation of the planet's mass is very much greater than we should infer from the apparent dimensions of the planet's globe. Since these planets are probably intermediate in condition, as they are in size, between our earth and the sun, we find another reason for inferring that the nuclear parts of the sun are exceedingly dense. If so, the difficulty which Mr. Croll has sought to deal with by imagining that not our sun

only, but every sun peopling space, has been produced by the collision of formerly dark masses rushing hither and thither with inconceivable velocities, would no longer exist.

One circumstance, however, remains to be noticed. We have endeavoured to explain the apparent age of our earth's strata by an assumption which in reality implies that the sun is a great deal older than he had been supposed to be. Not merely does our hypothesis require that he should be regarded as a great deal older, but, as it has not directly enhanced our estimate of his possible total duration, it assumes in fact that he is many millions of years nearer to his end as a living sun (so to speak) than has been commonly supposed. The process of contraction, on which his vitality as a sun depends, has gone on much farther, if our theory be sound, than if we suppose the globe of the sun, as we see it, to be of uniform or nearly uniform density throughout.

But it does not seem to us that the estimate of the sun's duration which would result from our theory, would fall short of that which astronomers had formed on the hypothesis that the sun is of uniform density. (We call our view a theory, because it is based on observed facts; the usual view an hypothesis, because no one has ever ventured to assert that any facts indicate its correctness.) On the contrary, according to the usual view, astronomers had recognised a certain limiting density not very far removed from the present supposed density of the sun, beyond which the process of contraction could not probably compress his globe. According to the theory we have brought forward in explanation of observed facts, the elements composing a mass at so high a temperature and subject to such enormous pressure as the sun's may attain even in the gaseous form a density far greater than has hitherto been considered possible. Enormously though we suppose the process of contraction to have gone beyond the extent heretofore believed in, we no longer recognise as close at hand any limit beyond which that process cannot pass. For our own part, in fine, while we consider it quite possible that the nucleus of the sun may be so tremendously compressed as to correspond to a past emission of solar heat for many hundreds of millions of years, we see no reason to believe that the process of contraction may not continue with the same emission of heat as at present for hundreds of millions of years to come. It appears to us as absurd to measure the probable amount of solar energy either already exerted in the past or available for the future, by considerations based on the behaviour of the elements at the temperatures and pressures we can obtain experimentally, as it was of old times to estimate the proportions of the heavenly bodies on the assumption that the earth is the all-important body which they were made to serve, or as it is in our own time to estimate the duration of the heavenly orbs by the minute time-intervals corresponding to the various stages of our earth's relatively insignificant existence.

Como and Il Medeghino.

To which of the Italian lakes should the palm of beauty be accorded? This question may not unfrequently have moved the idle minds of travellers, wandering through that loveliest region from Orta to Garda—from little Orta, with her gem-like island, rosy granite crags, and chestnut-covered swards above the Colma; to Garda, bluest of all waters, surveyed in majestic length from Desenzano or poetic Sirmione, a silvery sleeping haze of hill and cloud and heaven and clear waves bathed in modulated azure. And between these extreme points what varied lovelinesses lie in broad Maggiore, winding Como, Varese with the laughing face upturned to heaven, Lugano overshadowed by the crested crags of Monte Generoso, and Iseo far withdrawn among its rocky Alps! He who loves immense space, cloud shadows slowly sailing over purple slopes, island gardens, distant glimpses of snow-capped mountains, breadth, air, immensity, and flooding sunlight, will choose Maggiore. But scarcely has he cast his vote for this, the Juno of the divine rivals, when he remembers the triple lovelinesses of the Larian Aphrodite, disclosed in all their placid grace from Villa Serbelloni;—the green blue of the waters, clear as glass, opaque through depth; the *millefleurs* roses clambering into cypresses by Cadenabbia; the laburnums hanging their yellow clusters from the clefts of *Sasso Rancio*; the oleander arcades of Varenna; the wild white lime-stone crags of San Martino, which he has climbed to feast his eyes with the perspective, magical, serene, Lionardesquely perfect, of the distant gates of Adda. Then while this modern Paris is yet doubting, perhaps a thought may cross his mind of sterner, solitary Lake Iseo—the Pallas of the three. She offers her own attractions. The sublimity of Monte Adamello, dominating Lovere and all the lowland like Hesiod's hill of Virtue reared aloft above the plain of common life, has charms to tempt heroic lovers. Nor can Varese be neglected. In some picturesque respects, Varese is the most perfect of the lakes. Those long lines of swelling hills that lead into the level, yield an infinite series of placid foregrounds, pleasant to the eye by contrast with the dominant snow-summits, from Monte Viso to Monte Leone: the sky is limitless to southward: the low horizons are broken by bell-towers and farm-houses: while armaments of clouds are ever rolling in the interval of Alps and plain.

Of a truth, to decide which is the queen of the Italian lakes, is but an *infinita quæstio*; and the mere raising of it is folly. Still each lover

of the beautiful may give his vote; and mine, like that of shepherd Paris, is already given to the Larian goddess. Words fail in attempting to set forth charms which have to be enjoyed, or can at best but lightly be touched with most consummate tact, even as great poets have already touched on Como Lake—from Virgil with his "Lari maxume," to Tennyson and the Italian Manzoni. The threshold of the shrine is, however, less consecrated ground; and the Cathedral of Como may form a vestibule to the temple where silence is more golden than the speech of a describer.

The Cathedral of Como is perhaps the most perfect building in Italy for illustrating the fusion of Gothic and Renaissance styles, both of a good type and exquisite in their sobriety. The Gothic ends with the nave. The noble transepts and the choir, each terminating in a rounded tribune of the same dimensions, are carried out in a simple and decorous Bramantesque manner. The transition from the one style to the other is managed so felicitously, and the sympathies between them are so well developed, that there is no discord. What we here call Gothic, is conceived in a truly southern spirit, without fantastic efflorescence or imaginative complexity of multiplied parts; while the Renaissance manner, as applied by Tommaso Rodari, has not yet stiffened into the lifeless neo-Latinism of the later Cinque Cento: it is still distinguished by delicate inventiveness, and beautiful subordination of decorative detail to architectural effect. Under these happy conditions we feel that the Gothic of the nave, with its superior severity and sombreness, dilates into the lucid harmonies of choir and transepts like a flower unfolding. In the one the mind is tuned to inner meditation and religious awe; in the other the worshipper passes into a temple of the clear explicit faith—as an initiated neophyte might be received into the meaning of the mysteries.

After the collapse of the Roman Empire the district of Como seems to have maintained more vividly than the rest of Northern Italy some memory of classic art. *Magistri Comacini* is a title frequently inscribed upon deeds and charters of the earlier Middle Ages, as synonymous with sculptors and architects. This fact may help to account for the purity and beauty of the Duomo. It is the work of a race in which the tradition of delicate artistic invention had never been wholly interrupted. To Tommaso Rodari and his brothers Bernardino and Jacopo, the world owes this sympathetic fusion of the Gothic and the Bramantesque styles; and theirs too is the sculpture with which the Duomo is so richly decorated. They were natives of Maroggia, a village near Mendrisio, beneath the crests of Monte Generoso, close to Campione, which sent so many able craftsmen out into the world between the years 1300 and 1500. Indeed the name of Campionesi would probably have been given to the Rodari, had they left their native province for service in Eastern Lombardy. The body of the Duomo had been finished when Tommaso Rodari was appointed master of the fabric in 1487. To

complete the work by the addition of a tribune was his duty. He prepared a wooden model and exposed it, after the fashion of those times, for criticism in his *bottega*; and the usual difference of opinion arose among the citizens of Como concerning its merits. Cristoforo Solaro, surnamed Il Gobbo, was called in to advise. It may be remembered that when Michelangelo first placed his Pietà in St. Peter's, rumour gave it to this celebrated Lombard sculptor, and the Florentine was constrained to set his own signature upon the marble. The same Solaro carved the monument of Beatrice Sforza in the Certosa of Pavia. He was indeed in all points competent to criticise or to confirm the design of his fellow-craftsman. Il Gobbo disapproved of the proportions chosen by Rodari, and ordered a new model to be made; but after much discussion, and some concessions on the part of Rodari, who is said to have increased the number of the windows and lightened the orders of his model, the work was finally entrusted to the master of Maroggia.

Not less creditable than the general design of the tribune is the sculpture executed by the brothers. The north side door is a master-work of early Renaissance chiselling, combining mixed Christian and classical motives with a wealth of floral ornament. Inside, over the same door, is a procession of children, seeming to represent the Triumph of Bacchus, with perhaps some Christian symbolism. Opposite, above the south door, is a frieze of fighting Tritons—horsed sea deities pounding one another with bunches of fish and splashing the water, in Mantegna's spirit. The doorways of the façade are decorated with the same rare workmanship; and the canopies, supported by naked fauns and slender twisted figures, under which the two Plinies are seated, may be reckoned among the supreme achievements of delicate Renaissance sculpture. The Plinies are not like the work of the same master. They are older, stiffer, and more Gothic. The chief interest attaching to them is that they are habited and seated after the fashion of Humanists. This consecration of the two Pagan saints beside the portals of the Christian temple is truly characteristic of the fifteenth century in Italy. Beneath, are little bas-reliefs representing scenes from their respective lives, in the style of carved predellas on the altars of saints.

The whole church is peopled with detached statues, among which a Sebastian in the Chapel of the Madonna must be mentioned as singularly beautiful. It is a finely modelled figure, with the full life and exuberant adolescence of Venetian inspiration. A peculiar feature of the external architecture is the series of Atlantes, bearing on their shoulders urns, heads of lions, and other devices, and standing on brackets round the upper cornice just below the roof. They are of all sorts; young and old, male and female; classically nude, and boldly outlined. These water-conduits, the work of Bernardo Bianco and Francesco Rusca, illustrate the departure of the earlier Renaissance from the Gothic style. They are gargoyles; but they have lost the grotesque element. At the same time the sculptor, while discarding Gothic tra-

dition, has not betaken himself yet to a servile imitation of the antique. He has used invention, and substituted for grinning dragons' heads something wild and bizarre of his own in harmony with classic taste.

The pictures in the chapels, chiefly by Luini and Ferrari—an idyllic Nativity, with faun-like shepherds and choirs of angels—a sumptuous Adoration of the Magi—a jewelled Sposalizio with abundance of golden hair flowing over draperies of green and crimson—will interest those who are as yet unfamiliar with Lombard painting. Yet their architectural setting, perhaps, is superior to their intrinsic merit as works of art; and their chief value consists in adding rare dim flakes of colour to the cool light of the lovely church. More curious, because less easily matched, is the gilded woodwork above the altar of St. Abondio, attributed to a German carver, but executed for the most part in the purest Luinesque manner. The pose of the enthroned Madonna, the type and gesture of St. Catherine, and the treatment of the Pietà above, are thoroughly Lombard, showing how Luini's ideal of beauty could be expressed in carving. Some of the choicest figures in the Monastero Maggiore at Milan seem to have descended from the walls and stepped into their tabernacles on this altar. Yet the style is not maintained consistently. In the reliefs illustrating the life of St. Abondio we miss Luini's childlike grace, and find instead a something that reminds us of Donatello—a seeking after the classical in dress, carriage, and grouping of accessory figures. It may have been that the carver, recognising Luini's defective composition, and finding nothing in that master's manner adapted to the spirit of relief, had the good taste to render what was Luinesquely lovely in his female figures, and to fall back on a severer model for his bas-reliefs.

The building-fund for the Duomo was raised in Como and its district. Boxes were placed in all the churches to receive the alms of those who wished to aid the work. The clergy begged in Lent, and preached the duty of contributing on special days. Gifts of lime and bricks and other materials were thankfully received. Bishops, canons, and municipal magistrates were expected to make costly gifts on taking office. Notaries, under penalty of paying 100 soldi if they neglected their engagement, were obliged to persuade testators, *cum bonis modis dulciter*, to inscribe the Duomo on their wills. Fines for various offences were voted to the building by the city. Each new burgher paid a certain sum; while guilds and farmers of the taxes bought monopolies and privileges at the price of yearly subsidies. A lottery was finally established for the benefit of the fabric. Of course each payment to the good work carried with it spiritual privileges; and so willingly did the people respond to the call of the Church, that during the sixteenth century the sums subscribed amounted to 200,000 golden crowns. Among the most munificent donators are mentioned the Marchese Giacomo Gallio, who bequeathed 290,000 lire, and a Benzi, who gave 10,000 ducats.

While the people of Como were thus straining every nerve to complete a pious work, which at the same time is one of the most perfect masterpieces of Italian art, their lovely lake was turned into a pirate's stronghold, and its green waves stained with slaughter of conflicting navies. So curious is this episode in the history of the Larian lake that it is worth while to treat of it at some length. Moreover, the lives of few captains of adventure offer matter more rich in picturesque details and more illustrative of their times than that of Gian Giacomo de' Medici, the Larian corsair, long known and still remembered as Il Medeghino. He was born in Milan in 1498, at the beginning of that darkest and most disastrous period of Italian history, when the old fabric of social and political existence went to ruin under the impact of conflicting foreign armies. He lived on until the year 1555, witnessing and taking part in the dismemberment of the Milanese Duchy, playing a game of hazard at high stakes for his own profit with the two last Sforzas, the Empire, the French, and the Swiss. At the beginning of the century, while he was still a youth, the rich valley of the Valtelline, with Bormio and Chiavenna, had been assigned to the Grisons. The Swiss Cantons at the same time had possessed themselves of Lugano and Bellinzona. By these two acts of robbery the mountaineers tore a portion of its fairest territory from the Duchy; and whoever ruled in Milan, whether a Sforza, or a Spanish viceroy, or a French general, was impatient to recover this lost jewel of the ducal crown. So much has to be premised, because the scene of our hero's romantic adventures was laid upon the borderland between the Duchy and the Cantons. Intriguing at one time with the Duke of Milan, at another with his foes the French or Spaniards, Il Medeghino found free scope for his peculiar genius in a guerilla warfare, carried on with the avowed purpose of restoring the Valtelline to Milan. To steer a plain course through that chaos of politics, in which the modern student, aided by the calm clear lights of history and meditation, cannot find a clue, was of course impossible for an adventurer whose one aim was to gratify his passions and exalt himself at the expense of others. It is therefore of little use to seek motives of statecraft or of patriotism in the conduct of Il Medeghino. He was a man shaped according to Machiavelli's standard of political morality, self-reliant, using craft and force with cold indifference to moral ends, bent only upon wringing for himself the largest share of this world's power from men who, like himself, identified virtue with unflinching and immitigable egotism.

Il Medeghino's father was Bernardo de' Medici, a Lombard, who neither claimed nor could have proved cousinship with the great Medicean family of Florence. His mother was Cecilia Serbelloni. The boy was educated in the fashionable humanistic studies, nourishing his young imagination with the tales of Roman heroes. The first exploit by which he proved his *virtù*, was the murder of a man he hated, at the age of sixteen. This "virile act of vengeance," as it was called, brought

him into trouble, and forced him to choose the congenial profession of arms. At a time when violence and vigour passed for manliness, a spirited assassination formed the best of introductions to the captains of mixed mercenary troops. Il Medeghino rose in favour with his generals, helped to reinstate Francesco Sforza in his capital, and, returning himself to Milan, inflicted severe vengeance on the enemies who had driven him to exile. It was his ambition, at this early period of his life, to be made governor of the Castle of Musso, on the Lake of Como. While fighting in the neighbourhood, he had observed the unrivalled capacities for defence presented by its site; and some prevision of his future destinies now urged him to acquire it, as the basis for the free marauding life he planned. The headland of Musso lies about half way between Gravedona and Menaggio, on the right shore of the Lake of Como. Planted on a pedestal of rock, and surmounted by a sheer cliff, there then stood a very ancient tower, commanding this promontory on the side of the land. Between it and the water the Visconti, in more recent days, had built a square fort; and the headland had been further strengthened by the addition of connecting walls and bastions pierced for cannon. Combining precipitous cliffs, strong towers, and easy access from the lake below, this fortress of Musso was exactly the fit station for a pirate. So long as he kept the command of the lake, he had little to fear from land attacks, and had a splendid basis for aggressive operations. Il Medeghino made his request to the Duke of Milan; but the fox-like Sforza would not grant him a plain answer. At length he hinted that if his suitor chose to rid him of a troublesome subject, the noble and popular Astore Visconti, he should receive Musso for payment. Crimes of bloodshed and treason sat lightly on the adventurer's conscience. In a short time he compassed the young Visconti's death, and claimed his reward. The Duke despatched him thereupon to Musso, with open letters to the governor, commanding him to yield the castle to the bearer. Private advice, also entrusted to Il Medeghino, bade the governor, on the contrary, cut the bearer's throat. The young man, who had the sense to read the Duke's letter, destroyed the secret document, and presented the other, or, as one version of the story goes, forged a ducal order in his own favour.* At any rate, the castle was placed in his hands; and affecting to know nothing of the Duke's intended treachery, Il Medeghino took possession of it as a trusted servant of the ducal crown.

As soon as he was settled in his castle, the freebooter devoted all his energies to rendering it still more impregnable by strengthening the walls and breaking the cliffs into more horrid precipices. In this work

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* I cannot see clearly through these transactions, the muddy waters of decadent Italian plot and counterplot being inscrutable to senses assisted by nothing more luminous than mere tradition.

he was assisted by his numerous friends and followers; for Musso rapidly became, like ancient Rome, an asylum for the ruffians and outlaws of neighbouring provinces. It is even said that his sisters, Clarina and Margherita, rendered efficient aid with manual labour. The mention of Clarina's name justifies a parenthetical side-glance at Il Medeghino's pedigree, which will serve to illustrate the exceptional conditions of Italian society during this age. She was married to the Count Giberto Borromeo, and became the mother of the pious Carlo Borromeo, whose shrine is still adored at Milan in the Duomo. Il Medeghino's brother, Giovan Angelo, rose to the Papacy, assuming the title of Pius IV. Thus this murderous marauder was the brother of a Pope and the uncle of a Saint; and these three persons of one family embraced the various degrees and typified the several characters which flourished with peculiar lustre in Renaissance Italy—the captain of adventure soaked in blood, the churchman unrivalled for intrigue, and the saint aflame with holiest enthusiasm. Il Medeghino was short of stature, but well made and powerful; broad-chested; with a penetrating voice and winning countenance. He dressed simply, like one of his own soldiers; slept but little; was insensible to carnal pleasure; and though he knew how to win the affection of his men by jovial speech, he maintained strict discipline in his little army. In all points he was an ideal bandit chief, never happy unless fighting or planning campaigns, inflexible of purpose, bold and cunning in the execution of his schemes, cruel to his enemies, generous to his followers, sacrificing all considerations, human and divine, to the one aim of his life, self-aggrandisement by force and intrigue. He knew well how to make himself both feared and respected. One instance of his dealing will suffice. A gentleman of Bellano, Polidoro Boldoni, in return to his advances, coldly replied that he cared for neither amity nor relationship with thieves and robbers; whereupon Il Medeghino extirpated his family, almost to a man.

Soon after his settlement in Musso, Il Medeghino, wishing to secure the gratitude of the Duke, his master, began war with the Grisons. From Coire, from the Engadine, and from Davos, the Alpine pikemen were now pouring down to swell the troops of Francis I.; and their road lay through the Lake of Como. Il Medeghino burned all the boats upon the lake, except those which he took into his own service, and thus made himself master of the water passage. He then swept the "length of lordly Lario" from Colico to Lecco, harrying the villages upon the shore, and cutting off the bands of journeying Switzers at his pleasure. Not content with this guerilla, he made a descent upon the territory of the Trepievi, and pushed far up towards Chiavenna, forcing the Grisons to recall their troops from the Milanese. These acts of prowess convinced the Duke that he had found a strong ally in the pirate chief. When Francis I. continued his attacks upon the Duchy, and the Grisons still adhered to their French paymaster, the Sforza formally invested Gian Giacomo de' Medici with the perpetual governorship of Musso, the

Lake of Como, and as much as he could wrest from the Grisons above the lake. Furnished now with a just title for his depredations, Il Medeghino undertook the siege of Chiavenna. That town is the key to the valleys of the Splügen and Bregaglia. Strongly fortified and well situated for defence, the burghers of the Grisons well knew that upon its possession depended their power in the Italian valleys. To take it by assault was impossible. Il Medeghino used craft, entered the castle, and soon had the city at his disposition. Nor did he lose time in sweeping Val Bregaglia. The news of this conquest recalled the Switzers from the Duchy; and as they hurried homeward just before the battle of Pavia, it may be affirmed that Gian Giacomo de' Medici was instrumental in the defeat and capture of the French King. The mountaineers had no great difficulty in dislodging their pirate enemy from Chiavenna, the Valtelline, and Val Bregaglia. But he retained his hold on the Trepievi, occupied the Valsassina, took Porlezza, and established himself still more strongly in Musso as the corsair monarch of the lake.

The tyranny of the Sforzas in Milan was fast going to pieces between France and Spain; and in 1526 the Marquis of Pescara occupied the capital in the name of Charles V. The Duke, meanwhile, remained a prisoner in his Castello. Il Medeghino was now without a master; for he refused to acknowledge the Spaniards, preferring to watch events and build his own power on the ruins of the dukedom. At the head of 4,000 men, recruited from the lakes and neighbouring valleys, he swept the country far and wide, and occupied the rich champaign of the Brianza. He was now lord of the lakes of Como and Lugano, and absolute in Lecco and the adjoining valleys. The town of Como itself alone belonged to the Spaniards; and even Como was blockaded by the navy of the corsair. Il Medeghino had a force of seven big ships, with three sails and forty-eight oars, bristling with guns and carrying marines. His flagship was a large brigantine, manned by picked rowers, from the mast of which floated the red banner with the golden *palle* of the Medicean arms. Besides these larger vessels, he commanded a flotilla of countless small boats. It is clear that to reckon with him was a necessity. If he could not be put down with force, he might be bought over by concessions. The Spaniards adopted the second course, and Il Medeghino, judging that the cause of the Sforza family was desperate, determined in 1528 to attach himself to the empire. Charles V. invested him with the Castle of Musso and the larger part of Como Lake, including the town of Lecco. He now assumed the titles of Marquis of Musso and Count of Lecco; and in order to prove his sovereignty before the world, he coined money with his own name and devices.

It will be observed that Gian Giacomo de' Medici had hitherto acted with a single-hearted view to his own interests. At the age of thirty he had raised himself from nothing to a principality, which, though petty, might compare with many of some name in Italy—with Carpi, for example, or Mirandola, or Camerino. Nor did he mean to remain quiet

in the prime of life. He regarded Como Lake as the mere basis for more arduous undertakings. Therefore, when the whirligig of events restored Francesco Sforza to his duchy in 1529, Il Medeghino refused to obey his old lord. Pretending to move under the Duke's orders, but really acting for himself alone, he proceeded to attack his ancient enemies in the Grisons. By fraud and force he worked his way into their territory, seized Morbegno, and overran the Valtelline. He was destined, however, to receive a serious check. Twelve thousand Switzers rose against him on the one hand, on the other the Duke of Milan sent a force by land and water to subdue his rebel subject, while Alessandro Gonzaga marched upon his castles in the Brianza. He was thus assailed by formidable forces from three quarters, converging upon the Lake of Como, and driving him to his chosen element, the water. Hastily quitting the Valtelline, he fell back to the Castle of Mandello on the lake, collected his navy, and engaged the ducal ships in a battle off Menaggio. In this battle he was worsted. But he did not lose his courage. From Bellagio, from Varenna, from Bellano he drove forth his enemies, rolled the cannon of the Switzers into the lake, regained Lecco, defeated the troops of Alessandro Gonzaga, and took the Duke of Mantua prisoner. Had he but held Como, it is probable that he might have obtained such terms at this time as would have consolidated his tyranny. The town of Como, however, now belonged to the Duke of Milan, and formed an excellent basis for operations against the pirate. Overmatched, with an exhausted treasury and broken forces, Il Medeghino was at last compelled to give in. Yet he retired with all the honours of war. In exchange for Musso and the lake, the Duke agreed to give him 35,000 golden crowns, together with the feud and marquisate of Marignano. A free pardon was promised not only to himself and his brothers, but to all his followers; and the Duke further undertook to transport his artillery and munitions of war at his own expense to Marignano. Having concluded this treaty under the auspices of Charles V. and his lieutenant, Il Medeghino, in March 1532, set sail from Musso, and turned his back upon the lake for ever. The Switzers immediately destroyed the towers, forts, walls, and bastions of the Musso promontory, leaving in the midst of their ruins the little chapel of S. Eufemia.

Gian Giacomo de' Medici, henceforth known to Europe as the Marquis of Marignano, now took service under Spain; and through the favour of Anton de Leyva, Viceroy for the Duchy, rose to the rank of Field Marshal. When the Marquis del Vasto succeeded to the Spanish governorship of Milan in 1536, he determined to gratify an old grudge against the ex-pirate, and, having invited him to a banquet, made him prisoner. Il Medeghino was not, however, destined to languish in a dungeon. Princes and kings interested themselves in his fate. He was released, and journeyed to the court of Charles V. in Spain. The Emperor received him kindly, and employed him first in the Low Countries, where he helped to repress the burghers of Ghent, and at the

siege of Landrecy commanded the Spanish artillery against other Italian captains of adventure; for, Italy being now dismembered and enslaved, her sons sought foreign service where they found best pay and widest scope for martial science. Afterwards the Medici ruled Bohemia as Spanish Viceroy; and then, as general of the league formed by the Duke of Florence, the Emperor, and the Pope to repress the liberties of Tuscany, distinguished himself in that cruel war of extermination, which turned the fair Contado of Siena into a poisonous Maremma. To the last Il Medeghino preserved the instincts and the passions of a brigand chief. It was at this time that, acting for the Grand Duke of Tuscany, he first claimed open kinship with the Medici of Florence. Heralds and genealogists produced a pedigree, which seemed to authorise this pretension; he was recognised, together with his brother, Pius IV., as an offshoot of the great house which had already given Dukes to Florence, Kings to France, and two Popes to the Christian world. In the midst of all this foreign service he never forgot his old dream of conquering the Valtelline; and in 1547 he made proposals to the Emperor for a new campaign against the Grisons. Charles V. did not choose to engage in a war, the profits of which would have been inconsiderable for the master of half the civilised world, and which might have proved troublesome by stirring up the tameless Switzers. Il Medeghino was obliged to abandon a project cherished from the earliest dawn of his adventurous manhood.

When Gian Giacomo died in 1555, his brother Battista succeeded to his claims upon Lecco and the Trepievi. His monument, magnificent with five bronze figures, the masterpiece of Leone Lioni, from Menaggio, Michelangelesque in style, and of consummate workmanship, still adorns the Duomo of Milan. It stands close by the door that leads to the roof. This mausoleum, erected to the memory of Gian Giacomo and his brother Gabrio, is said to have cost 7,800 golden crowns. On the occasion of the pirate's funeral the Senate of Milan put on mourning, and the whole city followed the great robber, the hero of Renaissance *virtù*, to the grave.

Between the cathedral of Como and the corsair Medeghino there is but a slight link. Yet so extraordinary were the social circumstances of Renaissance Italy, that almost at every turn, on her sea-board, in her cities, from her hill-tops, we are forced to blend our admiration for the loveliest and purest works of art amid the choicest scenes of nature with memories of execrable crimes and lawless characters. Sometimes, as at Perugia, the *nexus* is but local. At others, one single figure, like that of Cellini, unites both points of view in a romance of unparalleled dramatic vividness. Or, again, beneath the vaults of the Certosa, near Pavia, a masterpiece of the serenest beauty carries our thoughts perforce back to the hideous cruelties and snake-like frauds of its despotic founder. This is the excuse for combining two such diverse subjects in one study.

J. A. S.

Child's Play.

THE regret we have for our childhood is not wholly justifiable: so much a man may lay down without fear of public ribaldry; for although we shake our heads over the change, we are not unconscious of the manifold advantages of our new state. What we lose in generous impulse, we more than gain in the habit of generously watching others; and the capacity to enjoy Shakspeare may balance a lost aptitude for playing at soldiers. Terror is gone out of our lives, moreover; we no longer see the devil in the bed-curtains nor lie awake to listen to the wind. We go to school no more; and if we have only exchanged one drudgery for another (which is by no means sure), we are set free for ever from the daily fear of chastisement. And yet a great change has overtaken us; and although we do not enjoy ourselves less, at least we take our pleasure differently. We need pickles now-a-days to make Wednesday's cold mutton please our Friday's appetite; and I can remember the time when to call it red venison, and tell myself a hunter's story, would have made it more palatable than the best of sauces. To the grown person, cold mutton is cold mutton all the world over; not all the mythology ever invented by man will make it better or worse to him; the broad fact, the clamant reality, of the mutton carries away before it such seductive figments. But for the child it is still possible to weave an enchantment over eatables; and if he has but read of a dish in a story-book, it will be heavenly manna to him for a week.

If a grown man does not like eating and drinking and exercise, if he is not something positive in his tastes, it means he has a feeble body and should have some medicine; but children may be pure spirits, if they will, and take their enjoyment in a world of moonshine. Sensation does not count for so much in our first years as afterwards; something of the swaddling numbness of infancy clings about us; we see and touch and hear through a sort of golden mist. Children, for instance, are able enough to see, but they have no great faculty for looking; they do not use their eyes for the pleasure of using them, but for by-ends of their own; and the things I call to mind seeing most vividly, were not beautiful in themselves, but merely interesting or enviable to me as I thought they might be turned to practical account in play. Nor is the sense of touch so clean and poignant in children as it is in a man. If you will turn over your old memories, I think the sensations of this sort you remember will be somewhat vague, and come to not much more than a blunt, general sense of heat on summer days, or a blunt, general sense of well-

being in bed. And here, of course, you will understand pleasurable sensations; for overmastering pain—the most deadly and tragical element in life, and the true commander of man's soul and body—alas! pain has its own way with all of us; it breaks in, a rude visitant, upon the fairy garden where the child wanders in a dream, no less surely than it rules upon the field of battle, or sends the immortal war-god whimpering to his father; and innocence, no more than philosophy, can protect us from this sting. As for taste, when we bear in mind the excesses of unmitigated sugar which delight a youthful palate, "it is surely no very cynical asperity" to think taste a character of the maturer growth. Smell and hearing are perhaps more developed; I remember many scents, many voices, and a great deal of spring singing in the woods. But hearing is capable of vast improvement as a means of pleasure; and there is all the world between gaping wonderment at the jargon of birds, and the emotion with which a man listens to articulate music.

At the same time, and step by step with this increase in the definition and intensity of what we feel which accompanies our growing age, another change takes place in the sphere of intellect, by which all things are transformed and seen through theories and associations as through coloured windows. We make to ourselves day by day, out of history, and gossip, and economical speculations, and God knows what, a medium in which we walk and through which we look abroad. We study shop windows with other eyes than in our childhood, never to wonder, not always to admire, but to make and modify our little incongruous theories about life. It is no longer the uniform of a soldier that arrests our attention; but perhaps the flowing carriage of a woman, or perhaps a countenance that has been vividly stamped with passion and carries an adventurous story written in its lines. The pleasure of surprise is passed away; sugar-loaves and watering-carts seem mighty tame to encounter; and we walk the streets to make romances and to sociologise. Nor must we deny that a good many of us walk them solely for the purposes of transit or in the interest of a livelier digestion. These, indeed, may look back with mingled thoughts upon their childhood, but the rest are in a better case; they know more than when they were children, they understand better, their desires and sympathies answer more nimbly to the provocation of the senses, and their minds are brimming with interest as they go about the world.

According to my contention, this is a flight to which children cannot rise. They are wheeled in perambulators or dragged about by nurses in a pleasing stupor. A vague, faint, abiding wonderment possesses them. Here and there some specially remarkable circumstance, such as a water-cart or a guardsman, fairly penetrates into the seat of thought and calls them, for half a moment out of themselves; and you may see them, still towed forward sideways by the inexorable nurse as by a sort of destiny, but still staring at the bright object in their wake. It may be some minutes before another such moving spectacle reawakens them to the

world in which they dwell. For other children, they almost invariably show some intelligent sympathy. "There is a fine fellow making mud pies," they seem to say; "that I can understand, there is some sense in mud pies." But the doings of their elders, unless where they are speakingly picturesque or recommend themselves by the quality of being easily imitable, they let them go over their heads (as we say) without the least regard. If it were not for this perpetual imitation, we should be tempted to fancy they despised us outright, or only considered us in the light of creatures brutally strong and brutally silly; among whom they condescended to dwell in obedience like a philosopher at a barbarous court. At times they display an arrogance of disregard that is truly staggering. Once, when I was groaning aloud with physical pain, a young gentleman came into the room and nonchalantly inquired if I had seen his bow and arrow. He made no account of my groans, which he accepted, as he had to accept so much else, as a piece of the inexplicable conduct of his elders; and, like a wise young gentleman, he would waste no wonder on the subject. Those elders, who care so little for rational enjoyment, and are even the enemy of rational enjoyment for others, he had accepted without understanding and without complaint, as the rest of us accept the scheme of the universe.

We grown people can tell ourselves a story, give and take strokes until the bucklers ring, ride far and fast, marry, fall, and die; all the while sitting quietly by the fire or lying prone in bed. This is exactly what a child cannot do, or does not do, at least, when he can find anything else. He works all with lay figures and stage properties. When his story comes to the fighting, he must rise, get something by way of a sword and have a set-to with a piece of furniture, until he is out of breath. When he comes to ride with the king's pardon, he must bestride a chair, which he will so hurry and belabour and on which he will so furiously demean himself, that the messenger will arrive, if not bloody with spurring, at least fiery red with haste. If his romance involves an accident upon a cliff, he must clamber in person about the chest of drawers and fall bodily upon the carpet, before his imagination is satisfied. Lead soldiers, dolls, all toys in short are in the same category and answer the same end. Nothing can stagger a child's faith, he accepts the clumsiest substitutes and can swallow the most staring incongruities. The chair he has just been besieging as a castle, or valiantly cutting to the ground as a dragon, is taken away for the accommodation of a morning visitor, and he is nothing abashed; he can skirmish by the hour with a stationary coal-scuttle; in the midst of the enchanted pleasance, he can see, without sensible shock, the gardener soberly digging potatoes for the day's dinner. He can make abstraction of whatever does not fit into his fable; and he puts his eyes into his pocket, just as we hold our noses in an unsavoury lane. And so it is, that although the ways of children cross with those of their elders in a hundred places daily, they never go in the same direction nor so much as lie in the same

element. So may the telegraph wires intersect the line of the high road, or so might a landscape painter and a bagman visit the same country and yet move in different worlds.

People struck with these spectacles, cry aloud about the power of imagination in the young. Indeed there may be two words to that. It is, in some ways, but a pedestrian fancy that the child exhibits. 'Tis the grown people who make the nursery stories; all the children do, is jealously to preserve the text. One out of a dozen reasons why *Robinson Crusoe* should be so popular with youth, is that it hits their level in this matter to a nicety; Crusoe was always at makeshifts and had, in so many words, to *play* at a great variety of professions; and then the book is all about tools, and there is nothing that delights a child so much. Hammers and saws belong to a province of life that positively calls for imitation. The juvenile lyrical drama, surely of the most ancient Thespian model, wherein the trades of mankind are successively simulated to the running burthen "On a cold and frosty morning," gives a good instance of the artistic taste in children. And this need for overt action and lay figures testifies to a defect in the child's imagination which prevents him from carrying out his novels in the privacy of his own heart. He does not yet know enough of the world and men. His experience is incomplete. That stage-wardrobe and scene-room that we call the memory is so ill-provided, that he can overtake few combinations and body out few stories, to his own content, without some external aid. He is at the experimental stage; he is not sure how one would feel in certain circumstances; to make sure, he must come as near trying it as his means permit. And so here is young heroism with a wooden sword, and mothers practise their kind vocation over a bit of jointed stick. It may be laughable enough just now; but it is these same people and these same thoughts, that not long hence, when once they are on the theatre of life, will set you weeping and trembling. For children think very much the same thoughts, and dream the same dreams, as bearded men and marriageable women. No one is more romantic. Fame and honour, the love of young men and the love of mothers, the business man's pleasure in method, all these and others they anticipate and rehearse in their play hours. Upon us, who are further advanced and fairly dealing with the threads of destiny, they only glance from time to time to glean a hint for their own mimetic reproduction. Two children playing at soldiers are far more interesting to each other than one of the scarlet beings whom both are busy imitating. This is perhaps the greatest oddity of all. "Art for art" is their motto; and the doings of grown folk are only interesting as the raw material for play. Not Théophile Gautier, not Flaubert, can look more callously upon life, or rate the reproduction more highly over the reality; and they will parody an execution, a deathbed or the funeral of the young man of Nain, with all the cheerfulness in the world.

The true parallel for play is not to be found, of course, in conscious

art, which is an abstract, impersonal thing, and depends largely upon philosophical interests beyond the scope of childhood. It is when we make castles in the air and personate the leading character in our own romances, that we return to the spirit of our first years. Only, there are several reasons why the spirit is no longer so agreeable to indulge. Nowadays, when we admit this personal element into our divagations we are apt to stir up uncomfortable and sorrowful memories, and remind ourselves sharply of old wounds. Our day dreams can no longer lie all in the air like a story in the *Arabian Nights*; they read to us rather like the history of a period in which we ourselves had taken part, where we come across many unfortunate passages and find our own conduct smartly reprimanded. And then the child, mind you, acts his parts. He does not merely repeat them to himself; he leaps, he runs, and sets the blood agog over all his body. And so his play breathes him; and he no sooner assumes a passion than he gives it vent. Alas! when we betake ourselves to our intellectual form of play, sitting quietly by the fire or lying prone in bed, we rouse many hot feelings for which we can find no outlet. Substitutes are not acceptable to the mature mind, which desires the thing itself; and even to rehearse a triumphant dialogue with one's enemy, although it is perhaps the most satisfactory piece of play still left within our reach, is not entirely satisfying, and is even apt to lead to a visit and an interview which may be the reverse of triumphant after all.

In the child's world of dim sensation, play is all in all. "Making believe" is the gist of his whole life, and he cannot so much as take a walk except in character. I could not even learn my alphabet without some suitable *mise-en-scène*, and had to act a business man in an office before I could sit down to my book. Will you kindly question your memory, and find out how much you did, work or pleasure, in good faith and soberness, and for how much you had to cheat yourself with some invention? I remember, as though it were yesterday, the expansion of spirit, the dignity and self-reliance, that came with a pair of mustachios in burnt cork, even when there was none to see. Children are even content to forego what we call the realities, and prefer the shadow to the substance. When they might be speaking intelligibly together, they chatter senseless gibberish by the hour, and are quite happy because they are making believe to speak French. I have said already how even the imperious appetite of hunger suffers itself to be gulled and led by the nose with the fag end of an old song. And it goes deeper than this: when children are together even a meal is felt as an interruption in the business of life; and they must find some imaginative sanction, and tell themselves some sort of story, to account for, to colour, to render entertaining, the simple processes of eating and drinking. What wonderful fancies I have heard evolved out of the pattern upon tea-cups!—from which there followed a code of rules and a whole world of excitement, until tea-drinking began to take rank as a game. When my cousin and I took our porridge of a

morning, we had a device to enliven the course of the meal. He ate his with sugar, and explained it to be a country continually buried under snow. I took mine with milk, and explained it to be a country suffering gradual inundation. You can imagine us exchanging bulletins; how here was an island still unsubmerged, here a valley not yet covered with snow; what inventions were made; how his population lived in cabins on perches and travelled on stilts, and how mine was always in boats; how the interest grew furious, as the last corner of safe ground was cut off on all sides and grew smaller every moment; and how, in fine, the food was of altogether secondary importance, and might even have been nauseous, so long as we seasoned it with these dreams. But perhaps the most exciting moments I ever had over a meal, were in the case of calves' feet jelly. It was hardly possible not to believe—and you may be sure, so far from trying, I did all I could to favour the illusion—that some part of it was hollow, and that sooner or later my spoon would lay open the secret tabernacle of the golden rock. There, might some miniature *Red Beard* await his hour; there might one find the treasures of the *Forty Thieves*, and bewildered Cassim beating about the walls. And so I quarried on slowly, with bated breath, savouring the interest. Believe me, I had little palate left for the jelly; and though I preferred the taste when I took cream with it, I used often to go without, because the cream dimmed the transparent fractures.

Even with games, this spirit is authoritative with right-minded children. It is thus that hide-and-seek has so pre-eminent a sovereignty, for it is the well-spring of romance, and the actions and the excitement to which it gives rise lend themselves to almost any sort of fable. And thus cricket, which is a mere matter of dexterity, palpably about nothing and for no end, often fails to satisfy infantile craving. It is a game, if you like, but not a game of play. You cannot tell yourself a story about cricket; and the activity it calls forth can be justified on no rational theory. Even football, although it admirably simulates the tug and the ebb and flow of battle, has presented difficulties to the mind of young sticklers after verisimilitude; and I knew at least one little boy who was mightily exercised about the presence of the ball, and had to spirit himself up, whenever he came to play, with an elaborate story of enchantment, and take the missile as a sort of talisman bandied about in conflict between two Arabian nations.

To think of such a frame of mind, is to become disquieted about the bringing up of children. Surely they dwell in a mythological epoch, and are not the contemporaries of their parents. What can they think of them? what can they make of these bearded or petticoated giants who look down upon their games? who move upon a cloudy Olympus, following unknown designs apart from rational enjoyment? who profess the tenderest solicitude for children, and yet every now and again reach down out of their altitude and terribly vindicate the prerogatives of age? Off goes the child, corporally smarting, but morally rebellious. Were there

ever such unthinkable deities as parents? I would give a great deal to know what, in nine cases out of ten, is the child's unvarnished feeling. A sense of past cajolery; a sense of personal attraction, at best very feeble; above all, I should imagine, a sense of terror for the untried residue of mankind: go to make up the attraction that he feels. No wonder, poor little heart, with such a weltering world in front of him, if he clings to the hand he knows! The dread irrationality of the whole affair, as it seems to children, is a thing we are all too ready to forget. "Oh, why," I remember passionately wondering, "why can we not all be happy and devote ourselves to play?" And when children do philosophise, I believe it is usually to very much the same purpose.

One thing, at least, comes very clearly out of these considerations; that whatever we are to expect at the hands of children, it should not be any peddling exactitude about matters of fact. They walk in a vain show, and among mists and rainbows; they are passionate after dreams and unconcerned about realities; speech is a difficult art not wholly learned; and there is nothing in their own tastes or purposes to teach them what we mean by abstract truthfulness. When a bad writer is inexact, even if he can look back on half a century of years, we charge him with incompetence and not with dishonesty. And why not extend the same allowance to imperfect speakers? Let a stockbroker be dead stupid about poetry, or a poet inexact in the details of business, and we excuse them heartily from blame. But show us a miserable, unbreeched human entity, whose whole profession it is to take a tub for a fortified town and a shaving-brush for the deadly stiletto, and who passes three-fourths of his time in a dream and the rest in open self-deception; and we expect him to be as nice upon a matter of fact as a scientific expert bearing evidence. Upon my heart, I think it less than decent. You do not consider how little the child sees, or how swift he is to weave what he has seen into bewildering fiction; and that he cares no more for what you call truth, than you for a gingerbread dragoon.

I am reminded, as I write, that the child is very inquiring as to the precise truth of stories. But indeed this is a very different matter, and one bound up with the subject of play, and the precise amount of playfulness, or playability, to be looked for in the world. Many such burning questions must arise in the course of nursery education. Among the fauna of this planet, which already embraces the pretty soldier and the terrifying Irish beggarman, is, or is not, the child to expect a Bluebeard or a Cormoran? Is he, or is he not, to look out for magicians, kindly and potent? May he, or may he not, reasonably hope to be cast away upon a desert island, or turned to such diminutive proportions that he can live on equal terms with his lead soldiery, and go a cruise in his own toy schooner? Surely all these are practical questions to a neophyte entering upon life with a view to play. Precision upon such a point, the child can understand. But if you merely ask him of his past behaviour, as to who threw such a stone, for instance, or struck such and such a

watch; or whether he had looked into a parcel or gone by a forbidden path; why, he can see no moment in the inquiry, and 'tis ten to one, he has already half forgotten and half bemused himself with subsequent imaginings.

It would be easy to leave them in their native cloudland, where they figure so prettily—pretty like flowers and innocent like dogs. They will come out of their gardens soon enough, and have to go into offices and the witness-box. Spare them yet a while, O conscientious parent! Let them doze among their playthings yet a little! for who knows what a rough, war-faring existence lies before them in the future?

R. L. S

Within the Precincts.

CHAPTER XXII.

A Chance for Law.

MR. ASHFORD took Lottie home that evening, walking with her to her own door. There was not much said; for, notwithstanding the armour of personal hope and happiness which she had put on, the shock of this personal encounter with her father and the woman who was to be her father's wife, made the girl tremble with secret excitement, in spite of herself. The woman: it was this, the sight and almost touch of this new, unknown, uncomprehended being brushing past her in the darkness which overwhelmed Lottie. That first contact made the girl sick and faint. She could not talk to Mr. Ashford any more—her voice seemed to die out of her throat, where her heart was fluttering. She could not think even what she had been saying. It was all confused, driven aside into a corner by that sudden apparition. Mr. Ashford, on his side, said little more than Lottie. It seemed to him that he had a sudden insight into all that was happening. He had heard, though without paying much attention, the common gossip about Captain Despard, who was not considered by anybody within the Precincts as a creditable inmate; but this curious little scene, of which he had been a witness, had placed him at once in the midst of the little drama. He seemed to himself to have shared in the shock Lottie had received. He walked softly by her side, saying little, full of compassion, but too sympathetic even to express his sympathy. He would not hurt her by seeming to be sorry for

SHE STOOD AND LISTENED, FEELING ALL HER TROUBLES CALMED.

her. When they parted he held her hand for a moment with a kind serious grasp, as if he had been her father, and said,

"You will send him to me to-morrow, Miss Despard? I shall expect him to-morrow."

"Oh—Law!" she said, with a little start and recovery. Poor Law had gone out of her mind.

"Poor child!" he said, as he turned towards his house; but before he had crossed the road he was met by Captain Temple coming the other way.

"Was that Miss Despard?" asked the old man. "Is it she you were saying good-night to? My wife told me she had gone towards the Slopes, and I was on my way to bring her home."

"I met her there, and I have just brought her home," said the Minor Canon. He could scarcely make out in the dark who his questioner was.

"That is all right—that is all right," said the old Chevalier. "She is left too much alone, and she should have some one to take care of her. I feel much obliged to you, Mr. Ashford, for I take a great interest in the young lady."

"It is—Captain Temple?" said Mr. Ashford, peering at the old man with contracted, short-sighted eyes. "I beg your pardon. Yes, Miss Despard is quite safe; she has been talking to me about her brother. What kind of boy is he? I only know he is a big fellow, and not very fond of his work."

Captain Temple shook his head. "What can you expect? It is not the boy's fault; but she is the one I take an interest in. You know I had once a girl of my own? just such another, Mr. Ashford—just such another. I always think of her when I see this pretty creature. Poor things—how should they know the evil that is in the world. They think everybody as good as themselves, and when they find out the difference, it breaks their sweet hearts. I can't look at a young girl like that, not knowing what her next step is to bring her, without tears in my eyes."

The Minor Canon did not make any reply; his heart was touched, but not as Captain Temple's was touched. He looked back at the dim little house, where as yet there were no lights—not thinking of Lottie as an all-believing and innocent victim, but rather as a young Britomart, a helmeted and armed maiden, standing desperate in defence of her little stronghold against powers of evil which she was noways ignorant of. It did not occur to him that these images might be conjoined, and both be true.

"I take a great interest in her," said old Captain Temple again, "and so does my wife, Mr. Ashford. My wife cannot talk of our loss as I do; but though she says little, I can see that she keeps her eye upon Lottie. Poor child! She has no mother, and, for that matter, you might say no father either. She has a claim upon all good people. She may be thrown

in your way sometimes, when none of us can be of any use to her. It would make me happy if you would say that you would keep an eye upon her too, and stand by her when she wants a friend."

"You may be sure I will do that—if ever it should be in my power."

"Thanks. You will excuse me speaking to you? Most people allow the right we have in our trouble to think of another like our own. I am quite happy to think you will be one of her knights too, Mr. Ashford. So will my wife. Ah, we owe a great deal—a great deal—to innocence. Good-night, and my best thanks."

Mr. Ashford could not smile at the kind old Chevalier and his monomania. He went home very seriously to his dark little house, where no one had lighted his lamp. He was not so well served as the Signor. There was a faint light on the stairs, but none in his dark wainscoted library, where the three small deep windows were more than ever like three luminous yet dim pictures hanging upon a gloomy wall. When he had lighted his reading-lamp, the pictures were put out, and the glimmering dim interior, with its dark reflections and the touches of gilding and faded brown of his books, came into prominence. He half smiled to think of himself as one of Lottie Despard's knights; but outside of this calm and still place, what a glimpse had been afforded him of the tumults and miseries of the common world, within yet outside all the calm precincts of ordered and regular life! The girl with whom he had been talking, stood *aux prises* with all these forces, while he, so much more able for that battle, was calm and sheltered. To see her struggling against the impassibility of a nature less noble than her own—to think of her all forlorn and solitary, piteous in her youth and helplessness, on the verge of so many miseries, wrung his heart with pity, with tenderness, with—— Was it something of envy too? All the powers of life were surging about Lottie, contending in her and around her; forces vulgar yet powerful, calling forth in that bit of a girl, in that slim creature, made, the man thought, for all the sweetness and protections of life, all its heroic qualities instead—while for such as he, thirty-five, and a man, fate held nothing but quiet, and mastery of all circumstances, Handel and the Abbey! What a travesty and interchange of all that was fit and natural!—for him ought to be the struggle, for her the peace; but providence had not ordained it so.

How often is this so! times without number; the weak have to struggle while the strong look on. Women and children labour while full-grown men rest; the sick and the feeble have all the powers of darkness to encounter, while the athlete yawns his unoccupied force away. So this strange paradox of a world runs on. The Minor Canon, who was of very gentle mould, with a heart open as day to melting charities, sat and thought of it with a giddiness and vertigo of the heart. He could not change it. He could not take up Lottie's trouble and give her his calm. One cannot stand in another's place—not you in mine, nor I

in yours—though you may be a hundred times more capable of my work than I. This was what Ernest Ashford thought sitting among his peaceful books, and following Lottie Despard in imagination into the little lodge which was her battlefield. Sympathy gave him the strongest mental perception of all that took place there. The only thing he had no clue to was the sweet and secret flood of consolation which subdued her sense of all her troubles—which already had drowned the dread of the future, and floated over with brightness the difficulties of the present in Lottie's heart.

Next morning Law arrived at the house of the Minor Canon, considerably to his own surprise, with his big Virgil under his arm. "I don't know whether you meant it, or if she understood you," he said, shy and uncomfortable, looking down at his shoes, and presenting the top of his head rather than his face to Mr. Ashford's regard, "but my sister said——"

"Yes; I meant it fully. Sit down and tell me what you have been doing, and whereabouts you are in your work. I have a pupil coming presently with whom probably you might read——"

"Well—you must know that I haven't been what you might call working very hard, you know," said Law, still butting at his future instructor with the top of his head. He sat down as Mr. Ashford directed him, but he did not give up the earnest contemplation of his boots. "It isn't so easy to get into the way of it when you're working alone. I left school a long time ago—and I don't know that it was much of a school—and latterly I was a little bit irregular—and so, you know——"

"I see," said the Minor Canon; "however it is not too late to do better. What is that big book under your arm—Virgil? Very well. Construe a passage for me, and let me see how you get on——"

"Shall I do a bit I know, or a bit I don't know?" said Law, raising his head this time with a doubtful gleam, half of merriment; "of course I want to put my best foot foremost—but I don't want to take you in all the same."

"I must trust you entirely on that point—or, give me the book, I will choose, and chance shall decide."

"Oh, hang it!" said Law under his breath; he would have been honest, and avowed what he knew; but this kind of Sortes did not please him. The perspiration came out on his forehead. Of course it was a very hard bit, or what Law thought a very hard bit, that turned up—and the way in which he struggled through it, growing hotter and hotter, redder and redder, was a sight to see.

"That will do," Mr. Ashford said, compassionate yet horrified. "That will do;" and he took the book out of his would-be pupil's hands with a sigh, and smoothed down the page, which Law had ruffled in his vain efforts, with a regretful touch, as though asking pardon of Virgil. "Suppose we have a little talk on this subject?" he said. "No doubt you have made up your mind what you would like to do?"

"Not I," said Law. "It will have to be some office or other—that's the only way in which a fellow who has no money seems to be able to make a living. A very poor living so far as I hear—but still it is something I suppose. That is not what I would like by nature. I'd like to go out to Australia or New Zealand. I hate the notion of being cooped up to a desk. But I suppose that is how it will have to be——"

"Because of your sister? you would not abandon her? it does you a great deal of credit," said the Minor Canon, with warmth.

"Well, because of her in one way," said Law; "because she is always so strong against it, and because I have no money for a start; you don't suppose that I would mind otherwise? No; Lottie is all very well, but I don't see why a man should give into her in everything. She will have to think for herself in future, and so shall I. So, if you will tell me what you think I could do, Mr. Ashford; I should say you don't think I can do anything after that try," said Law, with an upward glance of investigation, half wistful, half ashamed.

"Have you read English literature much? that tells nowadays," said the Minor Canon. "If you were to give any weight to my opinion, I would tell you to get the papers for the Army examination, and try for that."

"Ah! that's what I should like," cried Law; "but it's impossible. Fellows can't live on their pay. Even Lottie would like me to go into the army. But it's not to be done. You can't live on your pay. English! Oh, I've read a deal of stories—*Harry Lorrequer* and *Soapy Sponge*, and that sort of—rot."

"I am afraid that will not do much good," said the Minor Canon, shaking his head. "And, indeed, I fear if you are going to be successful you must set to work in a more serious way. Perhaps you are good at figures—mathematics?—no!—science, perhaps?—natural history——"

"If you mean the Zoological Gardens, I like that," said Law, beginning to see the fun of this examination, "and I should be very fond of horses if I had the chance. But that has nothing to say to an office. Figures, ha? yes, I know. But I always hated counting. I see you think there is nothing to be made of me. That is what I think myself. I have often told her so. I shall have to 'list, as I have told her." Law looked at his companion with a little curiosity as he said this, hoping to call forth an alarmed protestation.

But Mr. Ashford was not horrified. He was about to say, "It is the very best thing you could do," but stopped, on consideration, for Lottie's sake.

"You are a man to look at," he said, "though you are young; has it never occurred to you till now to think what you would like to be? You did not think you could go on for ever stumbling over ten lines of Virgil? I beg your pardon, I don't mean to be rude; but the most of us have to live by something, and a young man like you ought to have a notion what he is going to be about. You thought of the Civil Service?"

"I suppose Lottie did," said Law, getting up and seizing his book. "It is all her doing, from first to last; it is she that has always been pushing and pushing. Yes! what's the use of trying Virgil? I always felt it was all bosh. I don't know it, and what's more, I don't want to know it. I am not one for reading, it's not what I would ever have chosen; it is all Lottie, with her nagging and her pushing. And so I may go home and tell her you don't think me fit for anything," he added suddenly, with a slight break of unexpected feeling in his voice.

"Don't do anything of the kind. If you would only be open with me, tell me what are your own ideas, and intentions——"

"That's what everybody says," said Law, with a smile of half-amused superiority; "open your mind. But what if you've got no mind to open? *I* don't care what I do; I don't intend anything; get me in somewhere, and I'll do the best I can. A fellow can't speak any fairer than that."

The Minor Canon looked at him with that gaze of baffled inquiry which is never so effectually foiled as by the candid youth who has no intentions of his own and no mind to open. Law stood before him, stretching out his useless strength, with his useless book again under his arm—a human being thoroughly wasted; no place for him in the Civil Service, no good use in any of the offices. Why shouldn't he 'list if he wished it? it was the very best thing for him to do. But when Mr. Ashford thought of Lottie, this straightforward conclusion died on his lips.

"Why couldn't you live on your pay?" he said hurriedly; "it is only to exercise a little self-denial. You would have a life you liked and were fit for, and a young subaltern has just as much pay as any clerkship you could get. Why not make an effort, and determine to live on your pay? If you have the resolution, you could do it. It would be better certainly than sitting behind a desk all day long."

"Wouldn't it!" said Law, with a deep breath. "Ah! but you wouldn't require to keep a horse, sitting behind your desk; you wouldn't have your mess to pay; a fellow must think of all that. I suppose you've had enough of me?" he added, looking up with a doubtful smile; "I may go away?"

"Don't go yet." There sprang up in the Minor Canon's mind a kindness for this impracticable yet thoroughly practical-minded boy, who was not wise enough to be good for anything, yet who was too wise to plunge into rash expenses and the arduous exertion of living on an officer's pay; curious instance of folly and wisdom, for even an officer's pay was surely better than no pay at all. Mr. Ashford did not want to throw Law off, and yet he could not tell what to do with him. "Will you stay and try how much you can follow of young Uxbridge's work?" he said; "I daresay you have not for the moment anything much better to do."

Law gave a glance of semi-despair from the window upon the land-

scape, and the distance, and the morning sunshine. No! he had nothing better to do. It was not that he had any pleasures in hand, for pleasure costs money, and he had no money to spend; and he knew by long experience that lounging about in the morning without even a companion is not very lively. Still he yielded and sat down, with a sigh. Mere freedom was something, and the sensation of being obliged to keep in one place for an hour or two, and give himself up to occupation, was disagreeable; a fellow might as well be in an office at once. But he submitted. "Young Uxbridge?" he said; "what is he going in for? the Guards, I suppose?" Law sighed; ah! that was the life. But he was aware that for himself he might just as easily aspire to be a Prince as a Guardsman. He took his seat at the table resignedly, and pulled the books towards him, and looked at them with a dislike that was almost pathetic. Hateful tools! but nothing was to be done without them. If he could only manage to get in somewhere by means of the little he knew of them, Law vowed in his soul he would never look at the rubbish again.

Young Uxbridge, when he came in spick and span, in the freshest of morning coats and fashionable ties—for which things Law had a keen eye, though he could not indulge in them—looked somewhat askance at the slouching figure of the new pupil. But though he was the son of a Canon and in the best society, young Uxbridge was not more studious, and he was by nature even less gifted, than Law. Of two stupid young men, one may have all the advantage over another which talent can give, without having any talent to brag of. Law was very dense with respect to books, but he understood a great deal more quickly what was said to him, and had a play of humour and meaning in his face, a sense of the amusing and absurd if nothing more, which distinguished him from his companion, who was steadily level and obtuse all round, and never saw what anything meant. Thus, though one knew more than the other, the greater ignoramus was the more agreeable pupil of the two; and the Minor Canon began to take an amused interest in Law as Law. He kept him to luncheon after the other was gone, and encouraged the boy to talk, giving him such a meal as Law had only dreamt of. He encouraged him to talk, which perhaps was not quite right of Mr. Ashford, and heard a great deal about his family, and found out that, though Lottie was right, Law was not perhaps so utterly wrong as he thought. Law was very wrong, yet when he thus heard both sides of the question, the Minor Canon perceived that it was possible to sympathise with Lottie in her forlorn and sometimes impatient struggle against the *vis inertia* of this big brother, and yet on the other hand to have an amused pity for the big brother, too, who was not brutal but only dense, gaping with wonder at the finer spirit that longed and struggled to stimulate him into something above himself. So stimulated Law never would be. He did not understand even what she wanted, what she would have; but he was not without some good in him. No

doubt he would make an excellent settler in the backwoods, working hard there though he would not work here, and ready to defend himself against any tribe of savages; and he would not make a bad soldier. But to be stimulated into a first-class man in an examination, or an any-class man, to be made into a male Lottie of fine perceptions and high ambition, that was what Law would never be.

"But she is quite right," said Law; "something must be done. I suppose you have heard, Mr. Ashford, as everybody seems to have heard, that the governor is going to marry again?"

"I did hear it; will that make a great difference to your sister and you?"

"Difference? I should think it would make a difference. As it happens, I know P——, the woman he is going to marry. She makes no secret of it, that grown-up sons and daughters shouldn't live at home. I shall have to leave, whatever happens; and Lottie—well, in one way Lottie has more need to leave than I have: I shouldn't mind her manners and that sort of thing—but Lottie does mind."

"Very naturally," said the Minor Canon.

"Perhaps," said Law; "but I don't know where she gets her ideas from, for we never were so very fine. However, I might stand it, but Lottie never will be able to stand it; and the question follows, what is she to do? For myself, as I say, I could 'list, and there would be an end of the matter."

"But in that case you would not be of much use to your sister."

Law shrugged his shoulders "I should be of use to myself, which is the first thing. And then you know—but perhaps you don't know—all this is obstinacy on Lottie's part, for she might be as well off as any one. She might, if she liked, instead of wanting help, be able to help us all. She might start me for somewhere or other, or even make me an allowance, so that I could get into the army in the right way. When I think of what she is throwing away, it makes me furious; she might make my fortune if she liked—and be very comfortable herself, too."

"And how is all this to be done?" said the Minor Canon somewhat tremulously, with a half-fantastic horror in his mind of some brutal alternative that might be in Lottie's power, some hideous marriage or sacrifice of the conventional kind. He waited for Law's answer in more anxiety than he had any right to feel, and Law on his side had a gleam of righteous indignation in his eyes, and for the moment felt himself the victim of a sister's cruelty, defrauded by her folly and unkindness of a promotion which was his due.

"Look here," he said solemnly; "all this she could do without troubling herself one bit, if she chose; she confessed it to me herself. The Signor has made her an offer to bring her out as a singer, and to teach her himself first for nothing. That is to say, of course, she would pay him, I suppose, when he had finished her, and she had got a good engagement. You know they make loads of money, these singers—

and she has got as fine a voice as any of them. Well now, fancy, Mr. Ashford, knowing that she could set us all up in this way, and give me a thorough good start, she's refused; and after that she goes and talks about me!"

For a moment Mr. Ashford was quite silenced by this sudden assault. A bold thrust is not to be met by fine definitions, and for the first moment the Minor Canon was staggered. Was there not some natural justice in what the lout said? Then he recovered himself.

"But," he said, "there are a great many objections to being a singer." He was a little inarticulate, the sudden attack having taken away his breath. "A lady might well have objections: and the family might have objections."

"Oh! I don't mind," said Law; "if I did I should soon have told her; and you may be sure the governor doesn't mind. Not likely! the thing we want is money, and she could make as much money as ever she pleases. And yet she talks about me! I wish I had her chance; the Signor would not have to speak twice; I would sing from morning to night if they liked."

"Would you work so hard as that? then why don't you work a little at your books; the one is not harder than the other?"

"Work! Do you call singing a lot of songs, *work*?" said the contemptuous Law.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Good Advice.

"Oh, he did not say much," Law replied to Lottie's questioning when he went home in the afternoon. "He was very jolly—asked me to stay, and gave me lunch. How they live, those fellows! Cutlets, and cold grouse, and *pâté de foie gras*; something like. You girls think you know about housekeeping; you only know how to pinch and scrape, that's all."

Lottie did not reply, as she well might, that *pâtés de foie gras* were not bought off such allowances as hers; she answered rather with feminine heat, as little to the purpose as her brother's taunt, "As if it mattered what we ate! If you had grouse or if you had bread and cheese, what difference does it make? You care for such mean things, and nothing at all about your character or your living. *What* did Mr. Ashford say?"

"My character?" said Law; "I've done nothing wrong. As for my living, I'm sure I don't know how *that's* to be got, neither does he. He thinks I should emigrate or go into the army—just what I think myself. He's *very* jolly; a kind of man that knows what you mean, and don't just go off on his own notions. I think," said Law, "that he thinks it very queer of you, when you could set me up quite comfortably, either in

the army or abroad, not to do it. He did not say much, but I could see that he thought it very queer."

"I—could set you up—what is it you mean, Law?" Lottie was too much surprised at first to understand. "How could I set you up?" she went on faltering. "You don't mean that you told Mr. Ashford about ——? Oh, Law, you are cruel. Do you want to bring us down to the dust, and leave us no honour, no reputation at all? First thinking to enlist as a common soldier, and then—me!"

"Well, then you. Why not you as well as me, Lottie? You've just as good a right to work as I have; you're the eldest. If I am to be bullied for not reading, which I hate, why should you refuse to sing, which you like? Why you're always squalling all over the place, even when there's nobody to hear you—you could make a very good living by it; and what's more," said Law, with great gravity, "be of all the use in the world to me."

"How could I be of use to you?" said Lottie, dropping her work upon her knee and looking up at him with wondering eyes. This was a point of view which had not struck her before, but she had begun to perceive that her indignation was wasted, and that it was she only in her family who had any idea that a girl should be spared anything. "Law," she said piteously, "do you think it is because I don't want to work? Am I ever done working? You do a little in the morning, but I am at it all the day. Do you think Mary could keep the house as it is and do everything?"

"Pshaw," answered Law, "anybody could do that."

Lottie was not meek by nature, and it was all she could do to restrain her rising temper. "Mary has wages, and I have none," she said. "I don't mind the work; but if there is one difference between the common people and gentlefolk, it is that girls who are ladies are not sent out to work. It is for men to work out in the world, and for women to work at home. Would you like everybody to be able to pay a shilling and go and see your sister? Oh, Law! it is for you as much as for me that I am speaking. Everybody free to stare and to talk, and I standing there before them all, to sing whatever they told me, and to be cheered perhaps, and people clapping their hands at me—at me, your sister, a girl—— Law! you would not have it; I know you could not bear it. You would rush and pull me away, and cover me with a cloak, and hide me from those horrible people's eyes."

"Indeed, I should do nothing of the sort," said Law; "I'd clap you too—I should like it. If they were hissing, it would be a different matter. Besides, you know, you could change your name. They all change their names. You might be Miss Smith, which would hurt nobody. Come, now, if you are going to be reasonable, Lottie, and discuss the matter—why, your great friend Miss Huntington sang at a concert once—not for any good, not to be paid for it—only to make an exhibition of herself (and she was not much to look at, either); don't you remember?

It would be nothing worse than that, and heaps of ladies do that. Then it is quite clear you must 'do' something, and what else would you like to do?"

Lottie frowned a little, not having taken this question into consideration as it would have been right for her to do; but the things that concerned other people had always seemed to her so much more important. She never had any doubt of her own capabilities and energies. When the question was thus put to her she paused.

"Just now I am at home; I have plenty to do," she said; then, after another pause, "If things change here—if I cannot stay here, Law, why shouldn't we go together? You must get an appointment, and I would take care of you. I could make the money go twice as far as you would. I could help you if you had work to do at home—copying or anything, I would do it. It would not cost more for two of us than for one. I could do everything for you, even your washing; and little things besides. Oh, I don't doubt I could get quantities of little things to do," said Lottie, with a smile of confidence in her own powers; "and no one need be the wiser; you would be thought to have enough for us both."

"Listen to me, now," said Law, who had shown many signs of impatience, not to say consternation. "What you mean is (*if* you know what you mean), that you intend to live upon me. You needn't stare; you don't think what you're saying, but that is what you really mean when all is done. Look here, Lottie; if I were to get a place I should live in lodgings. I should bring in other fellows to see me. I shouldn't want to have my sister always about. As for not spending a penny more, that means that you would give me dinners like what we have now; but when I have anything to live on, of my own, I shall not stand that. I shall not be content, I can tell you, to live as we live now. I want to be free if I get an appointment; I don't want to have you tied round my neck like a millstone; I want to have my liberty, and enjoy myself. If it comes to that, I'd rather marry than have a sister always with me; but at first I shall want to have my fling and enjoy myself. And what is the use of having money," said Law, with the genuine force of conviction, "unless you can spend it upon yourself?"

Lottie was altogether taken by surprise. It was the first time they had thus discussed the question. She made no reply to this utterance of sound reason. She sat with her work on her knee, and her hands resting upon it, staring at her brother. This revelation of his mind was to her altogether new.

"But, on the other side," said Law, feeling more and more confidence in himself as he became used to the sound of his own voice, and felt himself to be unanswerable, "on the other side, a singer gets jolly pay, far better than any young fellow in an office; and you could quite well afford to give me an allowance, so that I might get into the army as a fellow ought. You might give me a hundred or two a year and never

feel it; and with that I could live upon my pay. And you needn't be afraid that I should be ashamed of you," said generous Law, "not one bit. I should stand by you and give you my countenance as long as you conducted yourself to my satisfaction. I should never forsake you. When you sang anywhere I'd be sure to go and clap you like a madman, especially if you went under another name (they all do); that would leave me more free. Now you must see, Lottie, a young fellow in an office could not be much good to you, but you could be of great use to me."

Still Lottie did not make any reply. No more terrible enlightenment ever came to an unsuspecting listener. She saw gradually rising before her as he spoke, not only a new Law, but a new version of herself till this moment unknown to her. This, as was natural, caught her attention most; it made her gasp with horror and affright. Was this herself—Lottie? It was the Lottie her brother knew. That glimpse of herself through Law's eyes confounded her. She seemed to see the coarse and matter-of-fact young woman who wanted to live upon her brother's work; to make his dinners scanty in order that she might have a share, to interfere with his companions and his pleasures—so distinctly that her mouth was closed and her very heart seemed to stop beating. Was this herself? Was this how she appeared to other people's eyes? She was too much thunderstruck, overawed by it, to say anything. The strange difference between this image and her own self-consciousness, her conviction that it was for Law's advantage she had been struggling, her devotion to the interests of the family before everything, filled her with confusion and bewilderment. Could it be she that was wrong, or was it he that was unjust and cruel? The wonder and suddenness of it gave more poignant and terrible force to the image of her which was evidently in Law's mind. All the selfish obtuseness of understanding, the inability to perceive what she meant or to understand the object of her anxiety which had so wounded and troubled her in Law, her brother had found in her. To him it was apparent that what Lottie wanted was not his good, but that she might have some one to work for her, some one to save her from working. She gazed not at Law, but at the visionary representation of herself which Law was seeing, with a pang beyond any words. She could not for the moment realise the brighter image which he made haste to present before her of the generous sister who made him an allowance and enabled him to enter the army "as a fellow ought," and of whom he promised never to be ashamed. It is much to be doubted whether Lottie had any warm sense of humour at the best of times; certainly she showed herself quite devoid of it now. She was so hurt and sore that she could not speak. It was not true. How could he be so cruel and unjust to her? But yet, could it be at all true? Was it possible that this coarse picture was like Lottie, would be taken for Lottie by any one else? She kept looking at him after he had stopped speaking, unable to take her eyes from him, looking like a dumb creature

who has no other power of remonstrance. Perhaps in other circumstances Lottie would have been so foolish and childish as to cry; now she battled vaguely, dismally, with a sense of heartbreaking injustice, yet asking herself could any part of it be true?

"Don't stare at me so," said Law; "you look as if you had never seen a fellow before. Though he was civil and did not say anything, it was easy to see that was what old Ashford thought. And I've got to go back to him to-morrow, if that will please you; and, by the way, he said he'd perhaps come and see you and tell you what he thought. By Jove, it's getting late. If I don't get out at once he'll come and palaver, and I shall have to stay in and lose my afternoon as I lost the morning. I'm off, Lottie. You need not wait for me for tea."

It did not make much difference to her when he went away, plunging down the little staircase in two or three long steps. Lottie sat like an image in stone, all the strength taken from her. She seemed to have nothing left to say to herself—no ground to stand on, no self-explanation to offer. She had exhausted all her power of self-assertion for the moment; now she paused and looked at herself as her father and brother saw her—a hard, scanty, parsimonious housekeeper, keeping them on the simplest fare, denying them indulgences, standing in their way. What if she kept the house, as she fondly hoped, like a gentleman's house, sweet and fresh, and as fair as its faded furniture permitted. What did they care for tidiness and order? What if she managed, by infinite vigilance and precaution, to pay her bills and keep the credit of the household, so far as her power went, unimpaired? They did not mind debts and duns, except at the mere moment of encountering the latter, and were entirely indifferent to the credit of the name. She was in her father's way, who before this time would have married the woman who brushed past Lottie on the Slopes but for having this useless grown-up daughter, whom he did not know how to dispose of; and if Law got an appointment (that almost impossible yet fondly cherished expectation which had kept a sort of forlorn brightness in the future), it now turned out that she would be in Law's way as much or more than in her father's. Lottie's heart contracted with pain; her spirit failed her. She who had felt so strong, so capable, so anxious to inspire others with her own energy and force; she who had felt herself the support of her family, their standard-bearer, the only one who was doing anything to uphold the falling house—in a moment she had herself fallen too, undermined even in her own opinion. Many a blow and thrust had she received in the course of her combative life, and given back with vigour and a stout heart. Never before had she lost her confidence in herself, the certainty that she was doing her best, that with her was the redeeming force, the honourable principle which might yet convert the others, and save the family and elevate the life of the house. What she felt now was that she herself, the last prop of the Despards, was overthrown and lying in ruin. Was it possible that she was selfish too, seeking her own ease like the rest,

avoiding what she disliked just the same as they did? A sudden moisture of intense pain suffused Lottie's eyes. She was too heart-struck, too fallen to weep. She covered her face with her hands, though there was no one to cover it from, with the natural gesture of anguish, seeking to be hidden even from itself.

Lottie did not pay much attention, although she heard steps coming up the stair. What did it matter? either it was Law who had stricken her so wantonly to the ground, or her father who did not care what happened to her, or Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, who did not count. Few other people mounted the stairs to the little drawing-room in Captain Despard's house. But when she raised her head, all pale and smileless, and saw that the visitor was Mr. Ashford, Lottie scarcely felt that this was a stranger, or that there was any occasion to exert herself and change her looks and tones. Did not he think so too? She rose up, putting down her work, and made him a solemn salutation. She did not feel capable of anything more. The Minor Canon drew back his hand, which she did not see, with the perturbation of a shy man repulsed. Lottie was not to him so unimportant a person as she was to her brother. She was surrounded by all the unconscious state of womanhood and mystery and youth—a creature with qualities beyond his ken, wonderful to him, as unknown though visible, and attracting his imagination more than any other of these wonderful mystic creatures, of whom he had naturally encountered many in his life, had ever done. His heart, which had so swelled with pity and admiration on Sunday evening, was not less sympathetic and admiring now, notwithstanding that it was through Law's eyes that he had been seeing her to-day; and this repulse, which was so unlike her candour and frankness yesterday, gave him a little pain. He wanted to be of use to her, and he wanted to tell her so—and to repel him while he had these generous purposes in his mind seemed hard. He sat down, however, embarrassed, on the chair she pointed him to, and looking at her, when thus brought nearer, he discovered, even with his short-sighted eyes, how pale she was and how woebegone. Some one had been vexing her, no doubt, poor child! This took the shyness out of Mr. Ashford's voice.

"I have come to make my report," he said, in as even a tone as he could command, "about Lawrence. He has told you——that he has been with me most part of the day?"

"Yes." When Lottie saw that more than this monosyllable was expected from her, she made an effort to rouse herself. "I fear it is not anything very encouraging that you have to say?"

"I have two things to say, Miss Despard—if you will permit me. Did you ever read Lord Chesterfield's Letters? But no, perhaps they are not reading for such as you. There are many wickednesses in them which would disgust you, but there is one most tragic touching thing in them——"

He made a pause; and Lottie, who was young and variable, and

ready to be interested in spite of herself, looked up and asked, "What is that?"

"I wonder if I may say it?—it is the effort of the father to put himself—not a good man, but a fine, subtle, ambitious, aspiring spirit—into his son; and the complete and terrible failure of the attempt."

"I do not know—what that can have to do with Law and me."

"Yes. Pardon me for comparing you in your generous anxiety to a man who was not a hero. But, Miss Despard, you see what I mean. You will never put yourself into Law. He does not understand you, he is not capable of it. You must give up the attempt. I am only a new acquaintance, but I think I must be an old friend, somehow. I want you to give up the attempt."

He looked at her with such a kind comprehension and pity in his eyes, that Lottie's heart sprang up a little from its profound depression, like a trodden-down flower, to meet this first gleam of sunshine. She did not quite see what he meant even now, but it was something that meant kindness and approval of her. "He cannot think *that* of me!" she said to herself.

"I am glad you will hear me out," he said, with a look of relief; "for the rest is better. Law is not stupid. He would not be your brother if he were stupid. He is a little too prudent, I think. He will not hear of emigrating because he has no money, nor of trying for the army because he could not live on his pay. Right enough, perhaps, in both cases; but a hot-headed boy would not mind these considerations, and a fellow of resolution might succeed in either way."

"He has always been like that," said Lottie. "You see Law does not want anything very much, except to be as well off as possible. He would never make up his mind what to try for. He says, anything: and anything means—— Oh! Mr. Ashford, I want to ask you something about myself. Do you think it is just as bad and selfish of me to refuse to be—oh! a public singer? I thought I was right," said Lottie, putting out her hands with unconscious dramatic action, as if groping her way; "but now I am all in doubt. I don't know what to think. Is it just the same? is it as bad of me?"

She looked at him anxiously, as if he could settle the question, and the Minor Canon did not know what reply to make. He was on both sides, feeling with her to the bottom of his heart; yet seeing, too, where the reason lay.

"I am very sure you are doing nothing either bad or selfish," he said; but hesitated, and added no more.

"You won't tell me," she cried; "that must mean that you are against me. Mr. Ashford, I have always heard that there was a great difference between girls and boys; like this: that for a boy to work was always honourable, but for a girl to work was letting down the family. Mamma—I don't know if she was a good judge—always said so. She said it was better to do anything than work, so as that people should

know. There was a lady, who was an officer's wife, just as good as we were, but they all said she was a governess once and were disagreeable to her. It seemed a kind of disgrace to all the children. Their mother was a governess——"

"But that is very bad; very cruel," said the Minor Canon. "I am sure, in your heart, that is not a thing of which you can approve."

"No," said Lottie, doubtfully; "except just this—that it would be far more credit—far more *right*, if the men were to try hard and keep the girls at home. That is what I thought. Oh, it is not the work I think of! Work! I like it. I don't mind what I do. But there must always be somebody for the work at home. Do you suppose Mary could manage for them if I were not here? There would be twice as much spent, and everything would be different. And do you not think, Mr. Ashford, that it would be more credit to them—better for every one, more honourable for Law, if he were at work and I at home, rather than that people should say, 'His sister is a singer?' Ah! would you let your own sister be a singer if you were as poor as we are? or would you rather fight it out with the world, and keep her safe at home, only serving you?"

"My sister!" said the Minor Canon. He was half affronted, half touched, and wholly unreasonable. "That she should never do! not so long as her brother lived to work for her—nor would I think it fit either that she should serve me."

"Ah, but there you are wrong," said Lottie, whose face was lighted up with a smile of triumph. "I thought you would be on my side! but there you are wrong. She would be happy, proud to serve you. Do you think I mean we are to be idle, not to take our share? Oh, no, no! In nature a man works and rests; but a woman never rests. Look at the poor people. The man has his time to himself in the evenings, and his wife serves him. It is quite right—it is her share. I should never, never grumble at that. Only," cried Lottie, involuntarily clasping her hands, "not to be sent outside to work there! I keep Mary for the name of the thing; because it seems right to have a servant; but if we could not afford to keep Mary, do you think I would make a fuss? Oh, no, Mr. Ashford; no! I could do three times what she does. I should not mind what I did. But if it came to going out, to having it known, to letting people say, 'His sister is a governess,' or (far worse), 'His sister is a singer'—it is that I cannot bear."

Mr. Ashford was carried away by this torrent of words, and by the natural eloquence of her eyes and impassioned voice, and varying countenance. He did not know what to say. He shook his head, but when he came to himself and found his footing again, made what stand he could. "You forget," he said, "that all this would be of no use for yourself or your future——"

"For me!" Lottie took the words out of his mouth with a flush and

glow of beautiful indignation. "Was it *me* I was thinking of? Oh, I thought you understood!" she cried.

"Let me speak, Miss Despard. Yes, I understand. You would be their servant; you would work all the brightness of your life away. You would never think of yourself; and when it suited them to make a change—say when it suited Law to marry—you would be thrown aside, you would find yourself without a home, wearied, worn out with your work, disappointed, feeling the thanklessness, the bitterness of the world."

Lottie's face clouded over. She looked at him, half-defiant, half appealing. "That is not how—one's brother would behave. You would not do it——"

"No; perhaps I would not do it—but, on the other hand," said Mr. Ashford, "I might do—what was as bad. I might make a sacrifice. I might—give up marrying the woman whom I loved for my sister's sake. Would that be a better thing to do?"

Their eyes met when he spoke of the woman he loved—that is, he looked at Lottie, who was gazing intently at him, and strangely enough, they could not tell why, both blushed, as if the sudden contact of their looks had set their faces aglow. Lottie instinctively drew back without knowing it—and he, leaning towards her, repeated, almost with vehemence—

"Would that be a better thing to do?"

Lottie hid her face in her hands. "Oh, no, no!" she said, her sensitive frame trembling. Mr. Ashford was old, and Law was but a boy—how could there be any question of the woman either loved?

"Forgive me, Miss Despard, if I seem to go against you—my heart is all with you; but you ought to be independent," he said; "either the woman would be sacrificed or the man would be sacrificed. And that kind of sacrifice is bad for everybody. Don't be angry with me; sacrifices generally are bad; the more you do for others, the more selfish they become. Have you not seen that even in your little experience? There are many people who never have it in their power to be independent; but those who have should not neglect it—even if it is not in a pleasant way."

"Even if it is by—being a singer?" She lifted her head again, and once more fixed upon him eyes which were full of unshed tears. Taking counsel had never been in Lottie's way; but neither had doubt ever been in her way till now. Everything before had been very plain. Right and wrong—two broad lines straight before her; now there was right and wrong on both sides, and her landmarks were removed. She looked at her adviser as women look, to see not only what he said, but whatsoever shade of unexpressed opinion might cross his face.

"It is not so dreadful after all," he said. "It is better than many other ways. I am afraid life is hard, as you say, upon a girl, Miss Despard. She must be content with little things. This is one of the

few ways in which she can really get independence and—stop, hear me out—the power to help others too."

Lottie had almost begun a passionate remonstrance; but these last words stopped her. Though she might not like the way, still was it possible that this might be a way of setting everything right? She stopped gazing at her counsellor, her eyelids puckered with anxiety, her face quite colourless, and expressing nothing but this question. Not a pleasant way—a way of martyrdom to her pride—involving humiliation, every pang she could think of; but still perhaps a way of setting everything right.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A Crisis.

When Lottie got up next morning, the world seemed to have changed to her. It had changed a little in reality, as sometimes one day differs from another in autumn, the world having visibly made a more marked revolution than usual in a single night. It had got on to the end of August, and there were traces of many fiery fingers upon the leaves on the Slopes. It had been a very fine summer, but it was coming prematurely to an end, everybody said, and about the horizon there began to be veils of luminous mist in the morning, and soft haze that veiled the evening light. This autumnal aspect of the world seemed to have come on in that one night. The Virginian creeper round the window had "turned" in several patches of scarlet and yellow all at once. It was beautiful, but it was the first step towards winter and the chills—the first evidence of a year decaying which makes the spectator pause and think. When Lottie woke, she felt in her heart that consciousness of something, she knew not what, something that had happened to her, that overshadowed her, and forced itself upon her before she could tell what it was, which is the way care manifests itself at our bedsides: something that made her heart heavy the first thing on awaking. Then she remembered what it was. Lottie, we have said, was not a girl who was in the habit of taking advice; but for that once she had taken it, seizing upon the first trustworthy witness she could find who would bring an impartial eye to the problem of her life. She had been very strong in her own opinion before, but when reason was put before her, Lottie could not shut her eyes to it. Neither could she dawdle and delay when there was anything to do. She awoke with the consciousness that some ghost was lurking behind her white curtains. Then with a start and shiver remembered and realised it, and, drawing herself together, made up her mind to act at once. What was the use of putting off? Putting off was the reason why Law was so backward, and Lottie was not one of those who let the grass grow under their feet. The more disagreeable the first step was, the more reason was there that it

should be taken to-day. She went downstairs with a gleam of resolution in her eyes. After the shock of finding out that there is a painful thing to do, the determination to do it at once is a relief. It brings an almost pleasure into the pain to set your face to it bravely and get done with it: there is thus an exhilaration even in what is most disagreeable. So Lottie felt. Her despondency and depression were gone. She had something definite to do, and she would do it, let what obstacle soever stand in the way. She made the family tea and cut the bread with more energy than usual. She was the first visible, as she always was, but her mind was fully occupied with her own affairs, and she was glad enough to be alone for half an hour. After that she had to go up again and knock at her father's door to remind him that there was but little time for breakfast before the bell began to ring for matins; but she had taken her own breakfast and begun her work before the Captain and Law came downstairs. When she had poured out their tea for them she sat down in the window-seat with her sewing. She did not take any share in their talk, neither did she watch, as she often did, the stir of morning life in the Dean's Walk—the tradesmen's carts going about, the perambulators from the town pushing upward, with fresh nursemaids behind, to the shady walk on the Slopes, now and then a tall red soldier showing against the grey wall of the Abbey opposite, the old Chevaliers beginning to turn out, taking their little morning promenade before the bells began. The stir was usually pleasant to Lottie, but she took no notice of it to-day. She was going to matins herself this morning—not perhaps altogether for devotion, but with the idea, after the service, of lying in wait at the north gate for the exit of the Signor.

How it was that the subject came under discussion Lottie did not know. She woke to it only when it came across herself and touched upon her own thoughts. It was Law who was saying something (it was fit for him to say so!), grumbling about the inequality of education, and that girls had just as good a right to work as boys.

"I should like to know," he said, "why I should have to get hold of a lot of books, and trot over to old Ashford, and work like a slave till one o'clock, while she sits as cool and as fresh as can be, and never stirs." He was not addressing anybody in particular, but grumbling to the whole world at large, which was Law's way. Generally, his father took no notice of him, but some prick of sensation in the air no doubt moved him to-day.

"Speak of things you know something about," said the Captain; "that's the best advice I can give you, Law. And let Lottie alone. Who wants her to work? The fresher she looks and the better she looks, the more likely she is to get a husband; and that's a girl's first duty. Is that the bell?" said Captain Despard, rising, drawing himself up, and pulling his collar and wrist-bands into due display. "Let me hear nothing about work. No daughter of mine shall ever disgrace herself and me in that way. Get yourself a husband, my child; that's

the only work I'll ever permit, that's all a lady can do. A good husband, Lottie. If I heard of some one coming forward, I'd be happier, I don't deny. Bring him to the scratch, my dear; or if you're in difficulty refer him to me."

He was gone before Lottie could utter a word of the many that rushed to her lips. She turned upon Law instead, who sat and chuckled behind his roll. "If it had not been for you, he would not have insulted me so!" she cried.

"Oh, insulted you!—you need not be so grand. They say you may have Purcell if you like," said Law, "or even the Signor; but it's the other fellow, Ridsdale, you know, your old flame, the governor is thinking of. If you could catch *him* now! though I don't believe a fellow like that could mean anything. But even Purcell is better than nothing. If you would take my advice——"

Lottie did not stay to hear any more. He laughed as she rushed out of the room, putting up her hands to her ears. But Law was surprised that she did not strike a blow for herself before she left him. Her self-restraint had a curious effect upon the lad. "Is anything up?" he said to himself. Generally it was no difficult matter to goad Lottie to fury with allusions like this. He sat quite still and listened while she ran upstairs into her own room, which was overhead. Then Law philosophically addressed himself to what was left of the breakfast. He had an excellent appetite, and the bell ringing outside which called so many people but not him, and the sight of the old Chevaliers streaming across the road, and the morning congregation hurrying along to the door in the cloisters, pleased him as he finished his meal, without even his sister's eye upon him to remark the ravages he made in the butter. But when he heard Lottie's step coming downstairs again Law stopped, not without a sense of guilt, and listened intently. She did not come in, which was a relief, but his surprise was great when he heard her walk past the open door of the little dining-room, and next moment saw her flit past the window on the way to the Abbey. He got up, though he had not finished, and stared after her till she, too, disappeared in the cloister. "Something must be up," he repeated to himself.

Lottie's silence, however, was not patience, neither was it any want of susceptibility to what had been said. Even this, probably, she would have felt more had her mind not been preoccupied by her great resolution. But when she found herself in the Abbey abstracted from all external circumstances, the great voice of the organ filling the beautiful place, the people silently filling up the seats, the choir in their white robes filing in, it seemed very strange to Lottie that the service could go on as it did, undisturbed by the beats of her heart and the commotion of her thoughts. Enough trouble and tumult to drown even the music were in that one corner where she leant her shoulder against the old dark oak, finding some comfort in the physical support. And she did not, it must be allowed, pay very much attention to the service; her voice

joined in the responses fitfully, but her heart wandered far away. No, not far away. Mr. Ashford's counsel, and her father's, kept coming and going through her mind. Truth to tell, Captain Despard's decision against the possibility of work gave work an instant value in his daughter's eyes. We do not defend Lottie for her undutifulness; but as most of the things she had cared for in her life had been opposed by her father, and all the things against which she set her face in fierceness of youthful virtue were supported by him, it could scarcely be expected that his verdict would be very effectual with her. It gave her a little spirit and encouragement in her newly-formed resolution, and it helped her a little to overcome the prejudice in her mind when she felt that her father was in favour of that prejudice. He did not want her to work, to bring the discredit of a daughter who earned her own living upon him; he wanted to sell her to any one who would offer for her, to make her "catch" some man, to put forth wiles to attract him, and bring him into her net. Lottie, who believed in love, and who believed in womanhood, with such a faith as perhaps girls only possess: what silent rage and horror filled her at this thought! She believed in womanhood, not so much in herself. For the sake of that abstraction, not for her own, she wanted to be wooed reverently, respected above all. A man, to be a perfect man, ought to look upon every woman as a princess of romance: not for her individual sake so much as for his sake, that he might fall short of no nobleness and perfection. This was Lottie's theory throughout. She would have Law reverence his sister, and tenderly care for her, because that would prove Law to be of the noblest kind of men. She wanted to be worshipped in order to prove triumphantly to herself that the man who did so was a heroic lover. This was how Rollo had caught her imagination, her deceived imagination, which put into Rollo's looks and words so much that was not really there. This simple yet superlative thread of romance ran through all her thoughts. She leaned back upon the carved oak of the stall, preoccupied, while the choristers chanted, thinking more of all this than of the service. And then, with a sudden pang, there came across her mind the thought of the descent that would be necessary from that white pedestal of her maidenhood, the sheltered and protected position of the girl at home, which alone seemed to be fit and right. She would have to descend from that, and gather up her spotless robes about her, and come out to encounter the storms of the world. All that had elevated her in her own conceit was going from her—and what, oh what could *he*, or anyone, find afterwards in her? He would turn away most likely with a sigh or groan from a girl who could thus throw away her veil and her crown, and stand up and confront the world. Lottie seemed to see her downfall with the eyes of her visionary lover, and the anguish that brought with it crushed her very heart.

Did it ever occur to her that an alternative had been offered for her acceptance? Once, for a moment, she saw Purcell's melancholy face look

down upon her from the organ-loft, and gave him a kind, half-sad, half-amused momentary thought. Poor fellow! she could have cried for the pain she must have given him, and yet she could have laughed, though she was ashamed of the impulse. Poor boy! it must have been only a delusion; he would forget it; he would find somebody of his own class, she said to herself, uneasy to think she had troubled him, yet with the only half smile that circumstances had afforded her for days past. Captain Despard, had he known, would have thought Purcell's suit well worthy of consideration in the absence of a better; and the Signor, whom Lottie had made up her mind to address, darted fiery glances at her from the organ-loft, taking up his pupil's cause with heat and resentment; but she herself sailed serenely over the Purcell incident altogether, looking down upon it from supreme heights of superiority. It did not occur to her as a thing to be seriously thought of, much less in her confusion and anguish, as a reasonable way of escape. And thus the morning went on, the chanting and the reading, and all those outcries to God and appeals to His mercy which His creatures utter daily with so much calm. Did anybody mean it when they all burst forth, "God have mercy upon us, Christ have mercy upon us?" This cry woke Lottie, and her dreaming soul came back, and she held up her clasped hands in a momentary passion of entreaty. The sudden wildness of the cry in the midst of all that stately solemnity of praying caught her visionary soul. It was as if all the rest had missed His ear, all the music and the poetry, King David harping on his harp, and Handel with his blind face raised to heaven; and nothing was left but to snatch at the garments of the Master as He went away, not hearing, not looking, or appearing not to look and hear. This poor young soul in the midst of her self-questionings and struggles woke up to the passionate reality of that cry. "God have mercy upon us, Christ have mercy upon us!" and then it went away from her again in thunders of glorious music, in solemnity of well-known words, and she lost herself once more in her own thoughts.

Lottie withdrew timidly into the aisle when the service was over. She knew the Signor would pass that way, and it seemed to her that it would be easier to speak to him there than to go to his house, which was the only other alternative. But the Signor, when he came out, was encircled by a group of his pupils, and darted a vengeful, discouraging glance at her as he passed. He would not pause nor take any notice of the step she made towards him, the wistful look in her face. If he had seen it, it would have given him a certain pleasure to disappoint Lottie, for the Signor had a womanish element in him, and was hot and merciless in his partisanship. He cast a glance at her that might have slain her, that was as far from encouraging her as anything could be, and passed quickly by, taking no other notice. Thus her mission was fruitless; and it was the same in the afternoon when she went out by the north door, and made believe to be passing when the musician came out. To do him justice, he had no notion that she wanted him, but wondered a little

to find her a second time in his way. He was obliged, as it was outside the Abbey, to take off his hat to her; but he did so in the most grudging hasty way, and went on talking with his pupils, pretending to be doubly engaged and deeply interested in what the lads were saying. There was no chance then, short of going to his house, of carrying out her resolution for this day.

But in the evening, when all was still, Lottie, who had been sitting at home working and thinking till her heart was sick and her brain throbbing, put on her hat and went out in the dusk to get the air at the door. It was a lovely quiet night, the moon rising over the grey pinnacles of the Abbey, marking out its great shadow upon the Dean's Walk, and the mignonette smelling sweet in all the little gardens. A few of the old Chevaliers were still about, breathing the sweetness of the evening like Lottie herself. Captain Temple, who was among them, came up to her with his old-fashioned fatherly gallantry as soon as he saw her. "Will you take a turn, my dear?" he said. He had no child, and she had never had, so to speak, any father, at least in this way. They went up and down the terrace pavement, and then they crossed the road to the Abbey, from which, though it was so late, the tones of the great organ were beginning to steal out upon the night. "Is this a ghost that is playing, or what can the Signor be thinking of?" Captain Temple said. Old Wykeham, that gruff old guardian of the sacred place, was standing with his keys in his hands at the south door. He had not his usual rusty gown, nor his velvet cap, being then in an unofficial capacity; but Wykeham would not have been Wykeham without his keys. And though he was gruff he knew to whom respect was due. "Yessir, there's something going on inside. One o' the Signor's fancies. He have got some friends inside, a playing his voluntaries to them. And if you like, Captain, I will let you in in a moment, sir." "Shall we go, my dear?" the old Captain said. And next moment they were in the great gloom of the Abbey, which was so different in its solemnity from the soft summer dark outside. There was a gleam of brilliant light in the organ-loft where the Signor was playing, which threw transverse rays out on either side into the darkness, showing vaguely the carved work of the canopies over the stalls, and the faded banners that hung over them. Down in the deep gloom of the choir below a few figures were dimly perceptible. Lottie and her kind old companion did not join these privileged listeners, They kept outside in the nave, where the moon, which had just climbed the height of the great windows, had suddenly burst in, throwing huge dimly coloured pictures of the painted glass upon the floor. Lottie, who was not so sensible as she might have been, preferred this partial light, notwithstanding the mystic charm of the darkness, which was somewhat awful to look in upon through the open door of the choir. She put her hand, a little tremulous, on the old Captain's arm, and stood and listened feeling all her troubles calmed. What was it that thus calmed her perturbed soul? She thought it was the awe of the place, the spell of

the darkness and the moonlight, the music that made it all wonderful. The Signor was playing a strange piece of old music when the two came in. It was an old litany, and Lottie thought as she listened that she could hear an unseen choir in the far distance, high among the grey pinnacles, on the edge of the clouds, intoning in intricate delicate circles of harmony the responses. Was it the old monks? Was it the angels? Who could tell? "Lottie, my love, that is the *vox humana* stop," said the kind old Captain, who knew something about it; and as he, too, was no wiser than other people, he began to whisper an explanation to her of how it was. But Lottie cared nothing about stops. She could hear the solemn singers of the past quiring far off at some unseen altar, the softened distant sweetness of the reply. Her heart rose up into the great floating circling atmosphere of song. She seemed to get breath again, to get rest to her soul: a strange impulse came over her. She who was so shy, so uncertain of her power, so bitterly unwilling to adopt the trade that was being forced upon her: it was all that she could do to keep herself from singing, joining to those mystical spiritual voices her own that was full of life and youth. Her breast swelled, her lips came apart, her voice all but escaped from her, soaring into that celestial distance. All at once the strain stopped, and she with it, coming down to the Abbey nave again, where she stood in the midst of the dim reflected rubies and amethysts and silvery whites of a great painted window, giddy and leaning upon the old Chevalier.

"It was the *vox humana*. It is too theatrical for my taste, my dear. It was invented by——"

"Oh, hush, hush," cried Lottie, under her breath; "he is beginning again."

This time it was the Pastoral Symphony the Signor played—music that was never intended for the chill of winter, but for the gleaming stars, the soft falling dews, the ineffable paleness and tenderness of spring. It came upon Lottie like those same dews from heaven. She grasped the old man's arm, but she could not keep herself from the response which no longer seemed to come back from any unseen and mystic shrine. Why should the old monks come back to sing, or the angels have the trouble, who have so much else to do, when Lottie was there? When the Pastoral Symphony was over, the Signor went on and she with him. Surely there must have been some secret understanding that no one knew of—not themselves. He played on unconscious, and she lifted up her head to the moonlight and her voice to heaven, and sang—

There were shepherds watching their flocks by night.

Lottie let go her hold of the Captain's arm. She wanted no support now. She wanted nothing but to go on, to tell all that divine story from end to end. It got possession of her. She did not remember even the changes of the voices; the end of one strain and another was nothing to her. She sang through the whole of the songs that follow each

other without a pause or a falter. And like her, without questioning, without hesitation, the Signor played on. It was not till she had proclaimed into the gloom that "His yoke is easy and His burden light," that she came to herself. The last chords thrilled and vibrated through the great arches and died away in lingering echoes in the vast gloom of the roof. And then there was a pause.

Lottie came to herself. She was not overwhelmed and exhausted by the effort as she had been at the Deanery. She felt herself come down, as out of heaven, and slowly became aware of Captain Temple looking at her with a disturbed countenance, and old Wykeham in all the agitation of alarm. "If I'd have known, I'd never have let you in. It's as much as my place is worth," the old man was saying; and Captain Temple, very kind and fatherly, but troubled too, and by no means happy, gave her his arm hurriedly. "I think we had better go, my dear," he said; "I think we had better go."

Some one stopped them at the door. Some one who took her hand in his with a warmth which enthusiasm permitted.

"I knew it must be you, if it were not one of the angels," he said; "one or the other. I have just come; and what a welcome I have had —too good for a king!"

"I did not know you were here, Mr. Ridsdale," said Lottie, faintly, holding fast by Captain Temple's arm.

"But I knew you were here; it was in the air," he said, half whispering. "Good-night; but good-night lasts only till to-morrow, thank heaven."

WASTING THE SWEET AUTUMNAL MORNING.

THE

CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

OCTOBER, 1878.

Within the Precincts.

CHAPTER XXV.

What Followed.

CAPTAIN TEMPLE was not happy about the events of that evening. He had begun to grow very fond of Lottie, and he was not pleased that she should have "made an exhibition of herself." He went over it so often to his wife that Mrs. Temple learned the incident by heart. There was in her mind, mingled with an intense silent interest in the girl who was like her own, a feeling of repulsion too, equally intense and silent, which joined with the opposite sentiment, and kept Lottie as constantly present to her mind as she was in the Captain's talk. And, though it sometimes appeared to her that she would die of this girl, who reminded her at every step that she had lost her child, yet she could not check her husband's ever-flowing, continually repeated

talk on the subject. Mrs. Temple thought this was all for his sake. Sometimes, in the bitterness of her loss, she would cry out that she loathed the very name of this other, who was so well and bright and full of life, while her child was dead and gone; but, notwithstanding, Lottie had gradually come to hold a large place in her life. How could she help thinking of her? grudging her very life and brightness, repenting her grudge, praying God's blessing on the girl whom she thus injured, avoiding her, fearing the sight of her, watching for her whom she feared; how could it be but that Mrs. Temple, in her lonely hours, should think of Lottie? She was the confidant now of the old Captain's regret.

"I thought she was a sweet modest girl," he said, shaking her head; "shy, even—as I like a girl to be—very like—; my dear, I cannot bear a girl to make an exhibition of herself——"

"But if there was no one to see her, and if you were in the dark?"

"That is true, my dear; but if they did not see her, they heard her. Such a voice! I wish you had been there—but that sort of public use of it—and to have the confidence to sing when she was not asked!" Captain Temple shook his head. He seemed to have done nothing but shake his head since last night.

"Do you think that the more she has a beautiful voice, the less she should let it be heard?" said his wife. "I am not so taken up with this Miss Despard as you are; but still I think you are unjust to her."

"Perhaps I am unjust to her. How can I help being taken up with her? If you knew her as well, you would be taken up with her too. And I wish you did, it would be a comfort to you. In everything she does, her walk, every little gesture, I see something that reminds me—I know you don't like to speak of it, my dear."

Mrs. Temple set her face like a rock while the old Captain talked on. He did nothing but speak of it, and she would not stop him. Had she not noticed the girl's walk? When Lottie passed, Mrs. Temple turned from the window, feeling as if some one had given her a blow. Yet, what had she gone to the window for, but to watch for Lottie? and she was more just to her than was the old Captain, who could not bear any falling off in his ideal, who thought that a girl should never make an exhibition of herself, and did nothing for a week after but shake his head.

The singing, however, made a great excitement in the Cloisters. It was only a select few who had been there to hear; and they thought it was all the Signor's arrangement, who had provided for them so much greater a pleasure than they expected—or, rather, an additional pleasure. "Who was it?" everybody asked. Was it possible it could be little Rowley? But it was inconceivable that a mere child like that could have taken the contralto solo as well as the soprano. But was it certain that there was only one voice? The darkness was deceptive, and all the circumstances were so unusual, so out of the ordinary. When you came to think of it, it could not be one voice. It must have been little Rowley and Mellor, the big boy, whose contralto was famous. At that

distance and in the dark it was so easy to deceive yourself and think there was only one person singing. There was nothing talked about next morning but this wonderful incident, and both the people who had been there and the people who had not been there (who were piqued, and felt themselves neglected, as a matter of course) discussed it with the utmost excitement. Even before the hour of matins, old Pick, who was out upon his master's business and Mrs. Purcell's errands, was twice interviewed on the subject. The first time it was Rowley, the tenor, who assailed him, whose boy was the first soprano, and whose rights were attacked. "I should just like to know what the Signor is up to," Rowley said. "He's always got some new fad or other in his head. He'll have us all up next into that organ-loft like a set of Christy Minstrels. Hanged if I'll go!"

"Anyhow, you'll wait till you're asked," said old Pick.

"I don't advise him to ask *me*. And, look here! I want to know who it was. If he's bringing in somebody in the dark, on the sly, to put them boys' noses out!—you never can tell what a foreign fellow's up to. I don't know a voice like that, not in the Abbey. If he's smuggling in a new boy, without no warning, to take the bread out of folks' mouths, by George, I won't stand it! I'll go to the Dean about it! Tommy's cried hisself hoarse. He couldn't eat his breakfast, poor little beggar! and he's got 'Hear my prayer' this morning. Hanged if I don't think it's all a scheme against me and my boy! That ain't a child's voice. There's a touch of falsetto in it, if I know anything about music. It won't last, not a month. I've heard them come out like that, that you could hear them a mile off, just before they break."

"Then you were there, Mr. Rowley?" said old Pick; "I thought there was only the folks from the Deanery there."

"I wasn't there. Catch me in the Abbey when I'm not wanted! I have enough of it, practising and bothering from morning till night. The Signor's very good for the organ. I don't say nothing against that; but he don't know much about Englishmen. You do no justice to your voice when you never give yourself no rest; but he can't understand that. I heard it outside. Pick, there's a good old fellow, you know what it is yourself, and I'm sure we're always glad to see you when you look in at our little place. Tell us what's up—who is it? Tommy will have to go in time. I don't say nothing against that. But he's not twelve, poor little beggar, and his voice is as clear as a bell. He's fit to fret himself into a fever if they take the first solos from him. Tell us what the Signor's up to, and who he's got coming in? I say it's a shame," said the tenor, rising again into vehemence. "Them that is on the spot, and belonging to the place, and bred up in the Abbey all their lives, hanged if they should be turned out for strangers! I don't see the fun of that."

"If you've done, Mr. Rowley, I think I'll go," said Pick; upon which Rowley swore under his breath that it wasn't like an old friend to give a

fellow no answer, and that he didn't know what he and Tommy had done to offend the Signor. To this old Pick made no reply, being himself extremely indignant not to know anything about the mystery in question. He had heard of no new boy—"nor anything as is new," Pick said to himself with warmth as he hurried through the enclosure which belonged to the lay clerks, where a great many people were at the doors and windows, and the excitement was general. It was natural that Pick should be indignant. So little as there ever was to hear or report within the Precincts, to think something should have happened under his very nose, in the Abbey, and he not know! The Signor was a good master, and the place was comfortable; but there are things which no man can be expected to stand. Even Mr. John had not said a word about any novelty. If he had told his mother, then the housekeeper had been as treacherous as the rest, and had not breathed a word to Pick. It was a thing that no man could be expected to put up with. Here were two ladies now bearing down upon him, full of curiosity—and that Pick should have to confess that he didn't know!

"Oh, Pickering! you must know—who was it that was singing in the Abbey last night? A very extraordinary thing for the Signor to countenance. He did not ask *us*; he knew it would be of no use, for neither my husband nor I approve of such proceedings; making the Abbey, our beautiful Abbey, into a kind of music-hall! I hear it was a lady: the very worst taste, and anything *so* unecclesiastical! Women don't *exist* in the Church—not as taking any part—but these are points which foreigners never will understand," said the lady, with a sigh.

"It was odd having such a performance at all, for a few privileged persons. I thought the Abbey at least," said the second lady, "was for all."

"Don't go, Pickering; you haven't answered my question. If I were you, being a man of experience, and having known the Abbey so long as you have done, I would give a hint to your master. You should tell him people here don't like that sort of thing. It may do very well abroad, or even in town, where there are all sorts; but it does not do in St. Michael's. You should tell him, especially, as he is only half English, to be more careful. Stop a little, Pickering! You have not answered my question yet."

"Beg your pardon, ma'am, but you didn't give me no time," said Pick.

"Do not be impertinent, Pickering. I asked you a plain question, and I told you what I should do in your place. A man like you, that has been so long about the Abbey, might be of great use to your master. You should tell him that in England a lady is never suffered to open her mouth in church. I never heard of anything so unecclesiastical. I wonder the Dean does not interfere—a man of good Church principles as he is, and with so much at stake. I really wonder the Dean does not interfere."

"Oh, the Dean!" said the other lady; "and as for Church principles——"

But just then there was a tremble in the air with the first movement of the matin bells, and, without compromising his dignity or showing his ignorance, old Pick made good his escape. He went home in anything but an amiable state of mind, and went straight to the kitchen, where Mrs. Purcell was busy, as was natural at this time of the day, putting all in order and arranging for the Signor's dinner. The luncheon Mary Anne was quite equal to, but some one was coming to dinner, for whom Mrs. Purcell intended to exercise all her powers. Pick went in with a fierce glow of indignant animation, with his roll of commissions fulfilled and unfulfilled.

"There's no sweetbreads to be had," he said, "till Saturday; they'll save you a pair on Saturday, if you send the order with the man when he comes; but they'll be six-and-six, if you think that too dear. (Dear! I should think it was dear. How much o' that goes to the veal, I wonder, and the man as fed it?) And as for game! you might as well go a-shooting on the Slopes; and what there is bringing its weight in gold. I wouldn't give in, if I was you, to that fashion about grouse. It's all a fashion. Nobody ever thought of grouse in my young days, and coming after they've eat everything as they can set their face to. What should they want with it? I've brought you the lemons. Many a man wouldn't be seen carrying a bag o' lemons all the way up the hill; and everything's kep' from me, just because I'm too humble-minded, and don't make no stand, nor mind what I do."

"What's been kep' from you, Pick?" said Mrs. Purcell, pausing in her work to look at him. Then she added, "There's been a deal of talking in the study. I've picked up a word or two about some woman, for they were going on about She; and She—but whether it's that Miss Despard, or who it is, John's never said a word to me."

"It don't need a witch to tell that it's a woman," said Pick; but he was relieved. "That fellow Rowley's been at me, and one of the ladies round the corner; but they both had so much to say that I got off, and neither the one nor the other found out as I hadn't a notion what they were talking about," the old man added with a chuckle. "It's some new voice, as far as I can make out, as master has got hold of for the Abbey: and quite right too. Tommy Rowley's got a pretty little bit of a voice, and he's only twelve; but some voices goes sooner than others. The ladies thought as it was a woman; but that's impossible. They were quite in a way. They said it was uneck—somethin or other—Dissenting-like, as I took it up—and that the Signor ought to be ashamed of hisself——"

"Master?" said Mrs. Purcell, opening her eyes wide; "but I hope you didn't stand there and hear them say any harm of the Signor?"

"They told me as I was to give him good advice," said Pick, still chuckling; "but all the same, ma'am, I don't think as Mr. John should keep a thing from his mother. Where's the young man as owes as much to his mother as that young man owes to you?"

"Not to me, to his own deservings; he's been a lad that has done credit to everyone as has been kind to him, Pick, and never forgets nobody as has been kind to him; but he's not the young man he was. He's lost all his smiles and his fun since he had that disappointment. I don't wish Miss Despard no harm, but I wish she had been a hundred miles from here, and my John had never seen her. Young women have a great deal to answer for," said Mrs. Purcell, with a sigh.

"Young women haven't much to answer for, so far as I'm concerned; nor master neither, so far as I can see," said Pick, going off to his work with a comfortable consciousness that, this being the case, it did not matter so much about Mr. John.

But, if the community was thus stirred in general, words cannot tell the excitement that this strange incident created in the organ-loft. The Signor told Purcell after, that he could not tell what it was that made him go on when he had come to an end of the Pastoral Symphony, and play "There were Shepherds." He had not meant to do it. He had intended to make the other the finale of his performance. There was such a feeling of night in it, the Signor said, the grass growing in the dark, and the stars shining, and the dew coming down. He meant to end there; he knew Mr. Ridsdale was a modern man and an opera man, and did not care so very much for Handel. Still he had meant to end with that; but when it came to the last chords he was not his own master, and he went on. As for Purcell, there was no need for anyone to tell him whose that voice was. Though he was at the moment helping to "blow," he nearly compromised the whole performance by darting to the other side of the organ-loft and gazing down into the darkness to see her. Happily the other man who was there, the professional blower, was taken by no such vagaries and kept on steadily. "And I saw her," Purcell said, "standing in the moonlight with all the colours of the rainbow about her, like the nimbus round the heads in Mr. Clayton's new window." The young fellow was quite struck by this sight. He thought it must mean something: he thought even she must be relenting towards himself, and had taken this strange way of showing it. The Signor was greatly moved too, but he did not take that view of the subject. He was a true artist himself, and he knew that there are impulses which get the better of people who are of this race. He patted his assistant on the arm and told him not to build on it. But what then could it mean, young Purcell said? and it was difficult to answer. They both of them came down from their lofty gallery afterwards in great excitement, and the Signor, confused, received the enthusiastic thanks of his audience. "What a pleasure you have given us!" they said; "you have been better than your word. What exquisite playing, and what an exquisite voice! You don't mean to say that was a boy, Signor?"—They asked the question, but they all believed, of course, that it was a boy. To think that little Rowley, because it was dark and nobody saw him, should have been able to sing like that! No one suspected the truth except Rollo Ridsdale,

who came up to the musician in the dark nave and gripped him by the arm, so that he hurt the sensitive Italian-Englishman whose nerves were all on the surface. "Did you do it on purpose?" Rollo cried excited too —"I shall give up the opera and take to oratorios—did you do it on purpose?" "Did *you* do it on purpose?" said the Signor, who up to this moment had supposed in his excitement that Ridsdale's coming must have had something to do with it. But after that question, which Rollo did not distinctly hear, the Signor changed his tone and hid his own astonishment, and accepted the applauses addressed to him on the admirable device by which he had given his hearers a double pleasure. And Purcell and he went home with their heads full of a hundred conjectures. Who had brought her in? how did she know of it even? Old Wykeham had kept his own counsel—he did not know whether he might not be supposed to have taken too much upon him had it been known; and, though he heard the two musicians talking of this miracle, he threw no light upon it, which he might have done so easily. Who could have told her? who could have brought her in? Purcell could not but think that her coming was a sign of relenting, that she was thus making a kind of celestial intimation that all was not over. This raised him into a very ecstasy of hope.

The Signor had other thoughts. He thought of nothing else all night; the sympathy and comprehension of an artist filling his mind and driving away the almost dislike with which, after her rejection of his *protégé*, he had been disposed to regard Lottie. Whatever might happen to Purcell, here was something which had never happened to himself in his life before. No doubt it had been a sudden impulse, like that which had made her fly trembling and pale with excitement, from himself and them all, in the drawing-room of the Deanery. This time the impulse had been the other way, and she had obeyed it. He had subjugated her by waiting her time, and, by what was much more pleasant to think of, the spell of his music, which had gone to her heart. Let it not be supposed that any sentiment about Lottie had begun to creep into the Signor's heart. Young women, as Pick said, had little to answer for as far as he was concerned. He was all artist, and not much else; but, with a glow through his being which answered, let us suppose, to the high throb of satisfaction which goes through persons who talk about their hearts, he said to himself, "she shall not escape me this time!" He knew more of Lottie than Rollo Ridsdale did. And he knew that he could make more of her than Rollo could make of her. He could make of her much more than was dreamed of in Rollo's philosophy. He knew what she needed, and he could give it to her. In his hands, the Signor thought, this simple English girl might rise to the level of the Malibrans, of the Pastas. There should be no one able to stand before her. It is to be feared he was thinking of this more than of the music as he played through King in F, which was the service for that morning. And he left Purcell to play the voluntary and stole out unobserved, though it was

indecorous, before the congregration had dispersed. He threaded through the dim aisles and the cloisters, before Wykeham had time to call attention to him by hobbling after him with his jangling keys. He, like Lottie, had resolved to give himself no time to think of it, to do it at once. Ridsdale!—What a vain fool he was, talking about giving up opera and taking to oratorios! What could he do with her, if he had got her? His manager had rejected Lottie, and gone off after that voice at Milan. What fools they all were! and what would be the advantage to Ridsdale of having this voice untrained on his hands? What could he do with her? but there was nothing she might not do under the guidance of the Signor.

It was still early when he reached the little house: Lottie had not attempted to go out this morning to see the Signor, she was too much shaken by her escapade of last night. How could she have done it? She, who had loathed the idea of becoming a singer! She had made a singer of herself by her own act and deed, and she felt the full meaning of what she had done. She had got up early, unable in her excitement to sleep, and tingling still with the consequences of this strange, unpremeditated, unintended self-betrayal. What was it that had made her do it? She had got her work, and she had placed herself near the window—not so near as to be seen, yet near enough to be able to glance out and see anyone who might be coming that way. There were things to be done in the house, domestic operations of more importance than the needlework. But Lottie said to herself that they could wait—oh, they could wait! In the meantime what was best was, that she should be ready in case anyone called, ready to see anybody that might come over the road, across the sunshine, in the morning quiet. "Good night; but only till to-morrow"—what was it that had conveyed to her the consciousness that he was there? The Abbey had been dark—she had not been thinking of him—certainly she had not known that he was looked for; and yet, what but the sense that he was there would have made her do what she had done? She had sung unwillingly, unwittingly, in spite of herself, because he was there. It all seemed quite plain to Lottie. He it was (she thought) who had first made her aware that this gift of hers was anything worth thinking of; he it was who had first given her the supreme pleasure of consciousness, who had shown to her the happiness she could bestow. Her voice (as she thought), if after all it was really worth anything, if it was the thing he thought it, the thing it sounded like last night—belonged to him. It was his spiritually; he had discovered it, and revealed it to herself. She had not been aware what she was doing; but unconsciously it was to him she was singing, when her voice escaped from her: it was a welcome to him—and he had accepted it as his welcome. Lottie gave a glance from her window, and thought she saw some one coming across the broad sunshine in the Dean's Walk. Her heart gave a louder beat; —*he* was coming. She made no mystery now about it, the preliminaries were all over. He came for her—who else? he had never concealed it; he had come for her long ago. She could not tell how long ago

it was since he had first caught a glimpse of her at the window. Always since then it had been for her that he came: content at first to watch outside her window; then, with a lover's ingenuity, finding out ways of meeting her; then venturing, bold yet timid, always reverential, to her home—and now at length what was coming? He was coming. And she had withdrawn the veil from her heart, and seen and acknowledged what was there. It was for him she sang: without knowing it, her heart had been aware of his presence; and now he was coming. Lottie drew back in the shade of the great leaves which garlanded her window. The next moment he would be here——

But it was only the Signor.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Fool's Paradise.

The Signor came in with some suppressed excitement about him, which he concealed under an air of perfect calm, but which betrayed itself in the gleam of his eyes and the rapidity of his movements. He saw in a moment that he had bitterly disappointed Lottie, whose countenance changed as she saw him—changed from glowing expectation to that sudden pallor and sickness of departing hope which seems to carry all the life out of a face. He saw it and he understood; he had the quickness of perception which belonged to his Italian origin, and he had, as we have said, a great deal that was feminine in him—this among the rest, that he could divine and read the meanings of a face. He saw at once what it was. She had expected, not him, but another. The Signor was very sorry for Lottie. He had been angry, almost spitefully angry, about her rejection of his favourite pupil; but she had made her peace with him last night, and all her offences had been condoned. He was very sorry for her. She had been looking for Ridsdale, and Ridsdale had not come. The Signor felt that he himself was a much safer and better visitor for her, but all the same he was sorry for Lottie. He bowed with a depth of respect which indeed he showed to all ladies. He was more of an Italian than an Englishman in this point; he was always ceremonious and stately to women, bowing to the ground, taking the hand offered to him reverentially, as if he meant to kiss it. This ceremony gave Lottie a little time to recover herself, and after all it was very early. The voluntary was still sounding from the Abbey (how had the Signor got away so soon?), and though *he* had not appeared yet, that was not to say that he was not coming. She took her seat again with the colour coming back.

"I do not know how to speak to you," he said; "how to thank you for last night——"

"Oh! so long as you do not think me very presumptuous—very

bold. I—could not help it. It was the music that went to my head," said Lottie, very tremulous, giving a hasty glance at him and then turning her head away.

"It is just because the music goes to your head that I have such high hopes—Miss Despard," said the Signor; "let bygones be bygones, won't you? and let us be friends."

"We never quarrelled that I know of," said Lottie, slightly alarmed; and, for his part, the Signor was confused, thinking of Purcell, of whose misadventure he had, of course, no right to know.

"You were not pleased with me," he said. "I did not worship your voice as some people do. I told you plainly that you wanted instruction. So you do still. Your voice is lovely, Miss Despard, and you have the soul of an artist. You can forget yourself. Little singers never forget themselves; they are always in the foreground seeing their own personality everywhere; but it is very different with you."

Lottie did not say anything in reply. She felt vaguely that he was giving her praise, but she did not mind. Was that someone coming in below? but it was only Captain Despard returning in after matins. The Signor, always so quick, felt again the flutter in her, and knew what her expectation was.

"You were once very angry with me for making a—an application to you. You thought I meant to be disrespectful? Ah, no. I could not fail of respect to a lady, Miss Despard; but I saw in you what I see still more clearly now."

"Signor!" said Lottie, rousing herself up to seize the opportunity, with a bewildered feeling that it was right to do it, that if she did not do it now, she never might: and finally that to do it might propitiate fate and make it unnecessary to be done—"Signor—let me tell you first. I went to the Abbey yesterday on purpose to see you, to say to you——ah, here is someone coming to interrupt us."

"Yes, there is someone coming to interrupt us," cried the Signor almost bitterly; this time there could be no doubt who it was; "but first one word before he comes. You were coming to tell me that you consented—that you would be my pupil?"

She could scarcely pay any attention to him, he saw. What a thing to think of, that a girl like this, a woman with genius, should let an empty-headed coxcomb come between her and all that was worth caring for, between her and Art! She gave him a confused, half-guilty look which seemed like a confession of weakness, and nodded only in reply. Nodded! when a proposal was made to her such as the Muse might have made to her chief favourite, when the gates of the Palace of Art were being rolled open wide to admit her. In that moment, Lottie, all pre-occupied by the advent of a mere man of fashion, in music not more than a charlatan, in honour not much to brag of, gave her consent to the arrangement which was to fashion her life by—a nod. Heaven and earth! what a demonstration of female folly! Could the Signor be any-

thing but vexed? He could hardly restrain his impatience, as Rollo came in, all eager and smiling, easy and cordial even to himself. The Signor, though he was as innocent of sentiment as old Pick, looked like nothing in the world so much as a scared, jealous, and despairing lover, watching, in spite of himself, the entrance of the conquering hero, for whom all the songs were sung and all the welcomes said.

"I might have known I should find Rossinetti here," said Rollo, "as he is an earlier bird than I am. Where could we all flock this morning but here? You have been thanking Miss Despard for her divine singing last night. My life, what singing it was! I have never heard anything like it. Miss Despard, I have come to announce to you my conversion. I abjure opera as I abjure the pope. Henceforward Handel is my creed —so long as you are his interpreter," he added, sinking his voice.

"Yes," said the Signor. "Miss Despard will sing very well if she works; but we are far yet from the highest excellence of which such a voice as hers is capable. I will take my leave now. Perhaps you have a friend who would bring you to my house? that would be the best. No doubt I could come here, but if you will come to my house, my piano is a very good one, and that would be the best. Don't think it is anything to be remarked, my pupils constantly do it. They bring a maid with them, or, if it is needful, I send for Mrs. ——, for my housekeeper. My young ladies are most unflatteringly at their ease with me."

"You are going to take lessons?" Rollo asked quickly. "I congratulate you, Rossinetti. My good fellow, you are a great genius, and I know very little, but I never was so envious of you before. All the same you know lessons are—teaching is—well, we must admit, not much more than a pretence in the present case. The habit of singing, that is all Miss Despard wants."

"You must pardon me that I don't agree with you," the Signor said, somewhat stiffly. "Miss Despard does not want flattery from me. She will get plenty of that by-and-bye; but she does want teaching, *senza complimenti*, and that she shall have if she will take it. It rests with her whether or not she will take it. If she does take it as I would have her do—then," said the Signor, with a gleam in his eyes of suppressed enthusiasm, "then I flatter myself——"

Rollo was provoked. Though he was very sweet-tempered, he did not like to be crowed over in this way, and his pleasant hyperbole flattened out; besides, there is something in the presence of a young woman which makes men, ever so slightly pitted against each other, pugnacious. He laughed. "I see," he said, "you won't flatter Miss Despard, Rossinetti, but you flatter yourself."

"I will send you word about hours," said the Signor hastily. "I beg your pardon, I did not quite catch your last observation. Good morning, Miss Despard. To-morrow or after to-morrow I shall hope to begin."

"Good-bye, for the moment; we shall meet later," said Rollo, with a

smile and a nod, turning to open the door for his—not rival certainly, but competitor. He opened the door and closed it behind the Signor with quite unnecessary attention, his face full of suppressed laughter and malicious satisfaction. Rollo felt that he remained master of the field. He came back to where Lottie, agitated and happy, was sitting, rubbing his hands with triumph. "The Signor is an excellent musician, but he is a prig, Miss Despard, if you will permit the word; and now that we have got rid of him," said Rollo, dropping into that other seat beside her, "let me say——"

What did he say? Lottie remembered most of the words for years and years. When she heard the sound of them again in other conversations, in sentences that had no relation to her, from other people, and even addressed to other people, she would hold her breath. Foolish girl! they were well-worn words, such as perhaps every woman possessing such a gift, or even a much smaller gift than Lottie's, has heard to weariness; but the most common approbation, which afterwards becomes the mere accompaniment and petty murmur of existence, one time in one's life is divine—as he told her her voice was, as he let her infer she too was, and everything about her. Lottie was not used to anything like flattery. Even in the best of circumstances, fathers and brothers are seldom enthusiastic; and kind Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, though she had given her countenance to Rowley's lessons, did not in the least conceal that she was bored by them; and the tenor was a great deal too much occupied with his own voice, and the compliments that had been paid to him, to leave him much time for complimenting his pupil. It was true that the Signor's wish to teach her was of itself the essence of flattery; but he never had given her any credit for her singing, and always had seen the faults of it. So that it was Rollo who had first revealed to her that heaven of praise which is so doubly sweet to the neophyte when it is supposed to be not her excellence, but his love, which inspires it. Lottie had no defence against the enthusiasm, the admiration, the rhapsodies of her companion. If they were excessive, that was not because he was failing in truth, but only abounding in love. So she thought. The very atmosphere around her turned into happiness. Her eyes were dazzled with it. She could not look at him nor lift her face except in momentary sudden glances, so much was the air full of this suffused, subdued, but penetrating glory. And, strangely enough, though he did not feel half so much as she supposed him to feel, Rollo himself was moved by this something in the air which rayed out from her exquisite dawn of bliss and of love. He said naturally a great deal more than he intended—and, what was more wonderful, he felt a great deal more than he could have supposed possible—and without the least purpose or thought, dropped moment by moment deeper and deeper into that curious kind of rapture which is tolerably well expressed by the phrase, falling in love. Reason had nothing to do with it nor intention; and he had not come here driven by a passion which was more strong than he was, as Lottie thought. But,

nevertheless, whether it was the magnetic influence of that sentiment in her which he had called forth without knowing it, and which now touched him with sympathetic life: or the more commonplace result of her beauty, and of their close propinquity, and her loneliness, and the generous impulse of protection and kindness that was in him: certain it is that all Lottie's ideas of him realised themselves in the young man's mind in the most miraculous way. He had always been, all his friends knew, ridiculously sympathetic all his life. Never before had it taken this precise form; but then, never before had Rollo met with the same combination of circumstances. He had flirted with a great many people, and foolish girls who were not prudent enough to remember his younger brotherhood and impecunious position, had liked his company and been very willing to roam along the first beginnings of the primrose path by his side; but nothing more than the lightest exchanges of sentiment had ever come to pass. And then he had believed of several women that they were "making a set" at him, and desiring to "catch" him. No degree of younger brotherhood, no amount of impecuniosity will prevent a man from thinking that some woman or other is trying to "catch" him; but never in all his life had Rollo come across a creature like Lottie, simply, solemnly, gratefully convinced that he was in love with her. Lottie had not been in love with him when she thought she found this out. But her certainty as to *his* sentiments had been absolute. And now this certainty was realising itself. It was a very different thing from the love which points directly and, as a matter of course, to the natural conclusion. He thought of nothing of the kind. He did not choose her out of all the world, as Lottie thought. But it came to very much the same thing as they sat together, talking about everything, dropping into mutual confidences, wasting the sweet autumnal morning. Lottie knew that all her domestic businesses were waiting for her, but did not care. And Rollo knew that, if he were questioned as to where he had been, he would have to invent an explanation other than the true one. But what did this matter? They sat and talked, forgetting even music, which was the one thing hitherto which had occupied them when together. He did not ask her to sing to him, which was a thing which made Lottie very happy, notwithstanding that it was his admiration of her voice only which had made her recognise and be glad of that possession. She had sung for him gladly, but now she was more pleased not to be asked to sing. What did they want with music? It would be hard to describe how well they came to know each other during that long morning's talk. He told her about himself, and she told him about herself, and thus they skimmed over very dangerous ground as to the beginning of their own acquaintance. Lottie, with a girl's shrinking from premature avowal, hurried over that point lest he might perhaps tell her how he had seen her, and dreamed of her, long before he dared claim acquaintance. Poor Lottie! but for that fond delusion she might have heard the real cause of his first eagerness to make her acquaintance

and been disenchanted. But what would it have mattered? By this time, things had gone too far to make it an advantage to her now to be undeceived.

This was the beginning of the time which was the crown and flower of life to Lottie Despard. Deceived and yet not deceived; creating really the sentiment which she believed in, yet not as she believed it: she herself all simple and trustful, impassioned in everything she undertook, then and there to the last fibre of her being gave her heart to Rollo Ridsdale—loved him, believing herself as fully justified as ever woman was, by the possession of his love, to bestow her own; and bestowing it purely, freely, without doubt or *arrière pensée*. His rank and the pleasure of thinking that some one out of the world above her, the world which she aspired to and felt herself to belong to, was seeking her, had dazzled Lottie at the first;—but by this time it did not matter to her who or what Rollo was. Sometimes even, she thought that she would prefer him to be more on her own level: then stopped and reproved herself proudly for wanting to take anything from him who deserved everything. His position as a patrician, his supposed wealth (how was Lottie to know that such a man, possessing everything, could be just as poor, and perhaps not much more honourable in respect to debt and such matters, than her father?), the grace and nobleness of all his surroundings were part of his nature, she thought in her simplicity. To shut him up in small rooms, confine him to the limited horizon of common life, and its poor little routine of duties, would be to take something from Rollo; and she did not want to take anything from him, rather to add any honour and glory that might be wanting. She did not know how long or how short a time they had been together on that wonderful morning before they first began to talk (as Lottie said) like friends. It lasted no more than a moment, and yet it was a new life all luminous and great, throwing the twenty years of the other life which had preceded it, entirely into shade. She had to stand still to steady herself and accustom her eyes to the ordinary atmosphere when he went away. Everything was changed. Her head went round. She did not know how to go downstairs (too late, much too late!) and look after the household matters which she had postponed; and when she did go to them, went hazily like one in a dream. What a change had come upon life! Yesterday, even Rollo was no more than a distant vision of possibilities to her; now she seemed to know him thoroughly, to know all about him; to feel that she could tell him whatever might happen, that it would be natural to confide everything to him—everything! her heart threw wide open its doors. She did not think even that he might wonder to find himself so entirely received into her life. Lottie had none of the experience which the most ordinary encounter with the world, which even ball-room tattle and the foolish commerce of flirtations give. She came to this first chapter, all innocent and original in heart and thought, with the frankness as well as the timidity of a nature unalarmed and (in this kind) knowing no evil. Love was to her an angel, the first of the angels—

inspiring awe, but no terror. She went to her work feeling as if she walked to some noble strain of music. Nothing could irritate her, nothing put her out.

That evening Lottie went out upon the Slopes in the dusk to breathe the evening air and give herself that fresher, sweeter medium for her dreams. Law was out, the Captain was out as usual; and the little house was very still with only Mary in the kitchen (for most of her time hanging about the back entrance looking for the baker), and Lottie upstairs. Somehow to-night Lottie did not wait for Captain Temple, who had constituted himself her escort, but as soon as it began to be really evening stole out by herself and made her way quickly up the Dean's Walk, not anxious to join anyone. She wanted to be alone for her thoughts. It was not that the slightest idea of meeting Rollo entered into her mind—how should it? The dinners at the Deanery were not like the afternoon meal in the Chevaliers' lodges, out of which all the inhabitants streamed as soon as that was over, to get the good of the summer night. Summer—for, though it was beginning to be autumn, it was still summer—warm, soft, delicious evenings with so much dusk in them, and misty sweetness. Lottie wanted nothing at that moment of dreamy happiness but silence and her own thoughts; more, however, was in store for her. The Deanery dinner was a family dinner that evening, and while the Dean read the evening paper, and Lady Caroline put up her feet on the sofa, what was a young man to do? He said he would go over to the Signor's, and talk music and smoke a cigar; and the elder people, though they were fond of Rollo, were not sorry to be rid of him. He wanted, perhaps, to enjoy his triumph over the Signor, or to find out what his plans were and expectations of Lottie's voice; or, perhaps, only he wanted a little variety, feeling the company of his venerated relations too much pleasure. But, though he was not so full of dreams as Lottie, something of the same charmed mood was in his mind. And when caprice made him take the turn up to the Slopes also, instead of going the other way through the Cloisters to the musician's house—and when the two caught sight of each other, they both started with genuine surprise, and there was on Lottie's side even a little alarm. She was too shy to beg him in so many words to go away, but it was only the want of courage which kept her from saying so. It was too much; it did not seem right to meet him again; but then Lottie reflected that to the merest acquaintance she was bound to be polite. Mr. Ridsdale had the same thought. He was unfeignedly delighted to see her, finding this way of escape from all possibility of dullness much more complete than he thought; but yet he felt that perhaps a second encounter so soon, and in a place open to all eyes, might be dangerous; notwithstanding, what could a man do? He was bound to be civil. He could not run away from a lady when he met her, simply because he admired her—a reason on the contrary to keep him by her side. So they took a stroll together, this way and that way, from one end to the other: it was not a very long way. He told

her that he was going to the Signor's, and she accepted the explanation very demurely, notwithstanding the fact that the Signor lived on the lower side of the Deanery and this was on the upper side; and she told him that she had only just come out, having missed Captain Temple, who would appear presently:—"He is my usual companion—he is very old, the oldest of all the Chevaliers—and he is very, very kind to me." Each accepted what the other thus said with a kind of solemnity; and they made two turns up and down, stopping now and then to look out upon the plain so broad and blue with the soft autumn mists hanging on the horizon. "Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness," Rollo said; and they stood still and gazed, following the river in its silvery windings, and silent as if their minds were absorbed in these atmospheric influences and that dusky bridal of the earth and sky. When Captain Temple came up, Rollo asked to be introduced to him, and was very civil. "Miss Despard has been waiting for you, and I have kept her company," he said, so that the old Captain thanked him civilly, if a little stiffly; and then the two turned their backs upon each other, Rollo hastening down to the Cloisters to keep, as he said, his appointment, and Lottie turning away without so much as a parting glance, without shaking hands. Captain Temple, alarmed at first, took heart, and thought it was nothing but politeness when he saw how they parted. "You were quite right, my dear, quite right to wait, and I am much obliged to Mr. Ridsdale; I cannot think how I missed you." Lottie did not make any reply, but compelled herself to talk, and very demurely, with much praise of the lovely night, went with him home.

If Captain Temple had but known! And after this how many meetings there were, so happily accidental, so easily explainable, and yet requiring no such explanation! How well they began to know each other's habits and each other's likings; and how sweet were all the dewy misty paths in that fool's paradise! or on the Slopes if you prefer it; it does not matter much about a name.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A Terrible Interruption.

While the time went on in this dream for Lottie, it did not stand still with the rest of the world. Her absorption in her own affairs, which for the moment had become complete, and withdrew her thoughts from much that had previously occupied them, was very agreeable to her father and brother. Lottie had exercised no control that she was aware of upon her father; but now that her keen eyes were veiled with dreams, and her mind abstracted from what was going on round her, it is inconceivable how much more free and at his ease the Captain felt. He had a jauntier air than ever, when he walked down into the town after he was released from matins; and he came in later at night. Captain Despard's doings at this time were much talked of in the lodges. He had never been approved

by his brother Chevaliers. The old gentlemen felt that this younger man, with his jauntiness and his love of pleasure, was no credit to them; and if the gossip was true about his intentions, some of them thought that something ought to be done. The ladies were still more indignant. They were threatened in their dignity more than their husbands were. An officer was an officer whatever happened; but if this man, who was in himself so objectionable, should bring in a dressmaker girl among them, it was the Chevaliers' wives who would be the sufferers. The gentlemen thought vaguely that something should be done; but the ladies were for carrying it to Parliament, or to the Queen herself. Was there not some old statute forbidding a Chevalier to marry? If there was not, there ought to be, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy said, with a twinkle in her eye. There was nobody, indeed, so much aggrieved as Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, who lived next door, and was already intimate with the family; and though there were times when she made a joke of it, there were also times when she was ready to go to the Queen on the subject.

"If there isn't a law, there ought to be one!" Mrs. O'Shaughnessy declared. "What do they want with wives at their age, if they haven't got 'em already? D'ye think I'd like to hear of me Major with a second, and me not cold in my grave?"

It was suggested that the Chevaliers should "speak to" this dangerous member of their corporation; but the old gentlemen, it was found, did not care to undertake this. Who would do it? There was not one of them who could use the privilege of friendship with this flighty dissipated fellow, who was young at fifty to the other veterans; and they had not the same confidence in the efficacy of "speaking to" a culprit which the ladies had.

So the little world within the Precincts looked on in great perturbation, sorry for Lottie, but still more sorry for themselves, whose credit was threatened by this danger. And jauntier and jauntier grew the Captain. He wore his hat more and more over his left ear—he got a new tie, louder and brighter than any that had ever been seen in the Precincts. His new suit was of a larger stripe. Altogether things were ripening for some new event. Something was going to happen; everybody felt it, in the air, in the heaviness of the autumn weather. Lottie's proceedings, which might otherwise have given much anxiety to the community, were veiled by the interest attaching to her father's; which indeed was well for Lottie, who was not at all times quite aware what she was doing, or where her steps were tending, as she walked and wandered—not in her sleep, but in her dreams.

There was another who took advantage of Lottie's abstraction, and that was Law. He had begun by going quite regularly to Mr. Ashford, "reading," as it was called, with the Minor Canon, whom he liked, and who was kind to him, and sharing the instructions which were being given to young Uxbridge, the son of the Canon. For a little while there had been gloom and consternation in this young man's home because of

Law. He was not a companion for her boy, Mrs. Uxbridge thought; but when this was suggested to the Minor Canon, he smiled so grimly, and answered with such uncompromising brutality, that of course he could have no possible objections to young Mr. Uxbridge's removal, that the mother nearly fainted, and Mr. Uxbridge himself, a large and stately person, had to stammer forth an apology. There was a dangerous gleam in Ashford's eye, enough to appal the Chapter, notwithstanding his inferiority to them, and there was nothing for it but to let him have his way. And for a week or two Law was exemplary—he allowed that for the first time in his life he could feel he was getting on; he became what he called "thick" with Uxbridge, who took him out boating and cricketing, and so far all went well. But when Lottie's vigilance all at once relaxed—when she began to steal out herself, and come in with her eyes all dazzled and dreamy, often not knowing when she was spoken to, taking so much less heed than usual of other people's proceedings, Law's industry began to flag. Sometimes he "shirked" altogether; very often he never looked at his books, except under Mr. Ashford's eye. He made Uxbridge idle too, who was but too much disposed to take a bad example. Uxbridge had a boat of his own, and they went on the river for days together. Sometimes a cricket match ended in a dinner, to which Law would be invited with his friend. He got into better company, but it is doubtful whether this was much to the advantage of his morals, and it certainly was not at all to the advantage of his studies. The Minor Canon remonstrated, and Lottie would now and then wake up and make an appeal to him.

"Are you working, Law? I hope you are working. Does Mr. Ashford think you are getting on?" she would say. But these were not like the energetic protests of old. And when Law answered that he was getting on pretty well, but that old Ashford didn't say much—it wasn't his way—Lottie accepted the reply, and asked no more questions. And Law accordingly took "his fling," being left free on all sides. Why shouldn't he take his fling? the others were doing it—even Lottie; did she think he was blind not to see how often that fellow Ridsdale was spooning about, and how many more walks she took than she used to? Captain Temple got tired of coming for her. Very often she had gone before he came—and would run back breathless, and so sorry to have missed him. What did all that mean if not that Lottie was taking her fling too? and his father—Captain Despard—was speeding very quickly towards such a thing as would startle the whole town, not to speak of the Abbey. It would be hard if Law were the only one to have his nose kept to the grindstone; and this, we may be sure, was the last thing he meant to allow.

As for Lottie, she carried on the business of her life in a way. The house did not suffer—the dinner was always punctual, and the stockings mended, notwithstanding dreams. She found time indeed for more actual occupation than before. She went to the Signor's—Mrs.

O'Shaughnessy generally, but sometimes Captain Temple, going with her when she went for her lessons—and she went to the Abbey more frequently than she had been used to do. These lessons were moments of excitement for the Signor's household. When it was the old Captain who accompanied Miss Despard, Mrs. Purcell was had in from her room where she sat expectant among her jam cupboards; and profound was her interest. She sat near the door hemming some dusters, while the lesson went on; but sometimes would drop her work and cross her hands, and raise her eyes to the dusky heaven of the ceiling.

"Dear, bless me!" said the housekeeper, "that was a note!" for she had learned a little about music after all her experiences. Her son rarely made his appearance at all; he would loiter about the passage and catch a glimpse of Lottie as she went in or out, and sometimes he would come in suddenly very red and agitated, to turn over the music or look for some song that was wanted. Lottie was very anxious always to be friendly to him; but though these lessons seemed to poor young Purcell the things which chiefly made life desirable, yet he was not sufficiently at his ease to make any reply to her greeting, except by a deeper blush and an embarrassed bow. And very often—so often that the Signor had almost wound himself up to the point of remonstrating, and old Pick had been charged to say that his master was engaged, and that no one could enter—Rollo Ridsdale would stray in by accident and form one of the party. It was very strange that, though old Pick had orders so precise, yet Rollo somehow always got in. How was it?

"I don't know myself," old Pick would say, with a grin; "he's the perseveringest gentleman I ever see—and awful fond of music. It must cost him a deal," Pickering said.

Rollo strolled in sometimes at the beginning, before due precautions had been taken, sometimes near the end when they were relaxed. He made himself very agreeable. As for Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, she was his slave, and she was quite persuaded by this time that she herself was nearly connected with the Courtland family, and that Rollo's uncle—or was it a cousin?—had been not only the Major's, but her own dearest friend. Captain Temple, when he was the chaperon, was more suspicious; but, notwithstanding his objection to young men, and especially to honourables, in connection with young women, Rollo ended by making the old Chevalier his friend. He had the gift of disarming prejudice—being kind himself by nature, and of a friendly disposition such as makes friends. And Rollo was very careful under the eyes of all these keen observers. He confined himself to music. He looked unutterable things; but he did not speak the applause that was implied in his looks. He said only, "I must not say anything, Miss Despard—I dare not, for Rossinetti; but I think the more."

Lottie did not want him to applaud her. It was enough for her that he heard her; but it was only when he was there that she did herself full justice. And it is not to be supposed that the Signor was ignorant

of the changed tone in her voice which showed when he appeared. It was too great a vexation to him to be ignored. Art, pure art, was not as yet, if it ever would be, the spring of Lottie's life. It was "that fellow." Her voice grew softer and more exquisite, full of pathos and meaning—her notes more liquid and sweet. If the Signor had been Rollo's rival in reality, he could scarcely have been more annoyed—he whose aspiration was to make a true artist of this creature, to whom heaven had given so glorious a medium of expression, but who as yet knew nothing about art.

Thus September stole away. Never before had Ridsdale been so long at the Deanery. He gave sometimes one reason and sometimes another for his delay. It was very convenient for him, as the place was central, and he was often obliged to run up to town to see after business connected with the opera. His company meant to open their house in spring, and the manager being in Italy, there was a great deal to do which fell upon Rollo. He had invitations without number, but he neglected them all. So long as his aunt would have him, there was no place so convenient for him as the Deanery. And Lady Caroline was very willing to have him. She had always been kind to him. If her feelings had been strong enough to justify anyone in considering himself her favourite, then Rollo might have done so. She had always been kind; and a habit of kindness is as good as any other habit, and is the best pledge of continuance. And she liked in a way to have him there. He never gave her any trouble—now and then he succeeded in something that was very like amusing her. And he no longer demanded of her that she should invite Miss Despard daily, or trouble herself with the other people who sang. Two or three times only during the month did he ask for an invitation for the girl in whose voice he was so much interested. And he was very domestic—triumphantly disproving all the stories that had been told of him. He never cared to dine anywhere but at home while he was at the Deanery—he did not care for company. He was a very nice companion for the Dean at dinner, and after dinner he would stroll out and smoke a cigar. If he gave trouble at Courtland, it was only, Lady Caroline thought with gentle complacency, because they did not know how to manage him; for anyone more happy to be quiet she never saw. And thus September passed; the partridges did not tempt him away, any more than the grouse had done. He did not care, he declared, about sport of any kind. Music and books, and his stroll of an evening on the Slopes to smoke his cigar—these were all the virtuous amusements Rollo desired—with these he was as happy as the day was long. And in October, Augusta, coming home from her bridal tour, was to visit her mother, and there would be a little society once more at the Deanery. It came to be understood that Rollo would stay for this. It would be something to make amends to him for the quiet of the past.

October began: it was a beautiful autumn; the trees on the Slopes were all red and yellow, like painted trees, and the face of the country

brilliant with sunshine. Everything was smooth and fair without, and within, so far as appearances went; and had there been no results to follow, little exception could have been taken to the proceedings of the persons concerned in this history who were each and all following their own pleasure and doing what seemed good in their own eyes. The Captain was perhaps the most safe and most virtuous of the whole, seeing that there was no reason why he should not marry Polly if he desired very much to do so, except that it would make his children uncomfortable and disturb the equanimity of his brother Chevaliers and their belongings. But he was in no way bound to consider the dignity of his brethren in the order, neither was he required by any law to sacrifice his own comfort for that of his son and daughter—both of them quite capable of taking thought for themselves. He may, therefore, be left out of the question; for, whether for good or evil, he was doing nothing more than he had a right to do. But in the case of the others: how pleasant would this episode of life have been had there been no consequences to follow! It was a most charming episode in the experience of Rollo Ridsdale. He was not a vicious man, but yet he had never been so virtuous, so free of evil, in all his consciousness before—his chief companion a perfectly pure-minded girl, his chief occupation to explore and study her fresh young heart and imagination, and vigorous intelligent nature. If only it could all go on to some as perfect conclusion, there could be no doubt that it was good for the speculative man of fashion. It restored him, body and soul,—regular hours, quiet, all the most luxurious comforts of life, and the delight and exhilaration of a romance to amuse the mental and sentimental side of him. The cleverest doctor that ever existed could not have recommended a more admirably curative process—if only there had been no responsibilities involved and nothing painful to follow. And Law—if Law had only had the prospect of a small estate, a small inheritance at the end, enough to live on, what a perfectly pleasant "time" he was having! He was doing no harm, only boating, cricketing, beginning now as the season went on to think of football—none of them wicked pursuits: if only there had been no examinations to think of, no work of life to prepare for. Lottie was the least to blame of the three; the consequences did not trouble her. She might perhaps be allowing herself to be absorbed too much by the new and wonderful influence which had taken possession of her: the *vita nuova* might have become too entirely the law of her being; but well or ill she still did her duty, and her realisation of the result was perfectly simple. What but one thing could all this lead to? No doubt invaded Lottie's inexperienced mind; how could she doubt that Rollo loved her? What proof was wanting that man could give? They had not yet spoken of that love, though they had several times approached to the very verge of an explanation, from which generally it was she who shrank with a shy prolonging of that delicious uncertainty which was no uncertainty at all. How could Lottie have any doubt? It was not necessary even for her to say to herself that he was good and true. True!

—she no more thought of falsehood than Eve had thought of the serpent before he hissed his first question into her ear. She did not understand what lying meant, practical lying of this kind. She let the sweet current sweep her on with many a heart-beat; but why should she be distrustful of it? What could love lead to but happiness? Lottie could not think of anything more.

And thus the time went on. Augusta Huntington (Mrs. Daventry) was coming home with her husband in a day or two, and though Lottie thought she would be glad to see her old friend, she had a little secret fear of anything now happening. All was very well as it was. To meet Rollo accidentally as he smoked his cigar on the Slopes would not be so easy if his cousin were at the Deanery. He would not be able to get out so easily, and probably she would find a great many new ways of employing him which would take him out of Lottie's way. She did not like to look forward to it; and after Augusta's visit Rollo too would go away. It would be almost winter, and he could not stop any longer. All the shooting and the deerstalking and the round of visits to great people, on which he ought to be going, he had given up for her. What could the reason be but for her? The thought that this moment of happiness was approaching an end, was sad to Lottie, even though it should, as was natural, be followed by greater happiness still. How her dull life had flowered and blossomed out, made beautiful by the thought that he was near her, this man who loved her—who had loved her long before she had loved him, but whom now she too—! He was near, she remembered every morning when she woke; some time in the day she would be sure to see him—nay, half a dozen times in the day, if only strolling down the Dean's Walk looking at her window, and in the Abbey, and perhaps, while she took her lesson, listening to her with soft eyes; perhaps walking home with her; perhaps just turning round that old elm-tree on the Slopes as she came out for her evening walk; always looking for her so eagerly, seeking her, with a hundred little tender cares, and something in his eyes which was more than all. Could it be possible to be happier than now? She was keeping off the *éclaircissement* with delicious shy malice, running away from it, prolonging a little onger, and a little longer, this happy uncertainty. Some time, however, it must come, and then no doubt she would be more happy—though not with such happiness as this.

On one of those lovely russet-coloured afternoons, full of haze made golden by the sunshine, already turning to the west, Lottie walking up St. Michael's Hill, towards the Abbey, had seen a fly driving along the street which had caught her eye as she passed. She knew it very well; it was Jobling's fly—a nice respectable clean cab, looking for all the world like a shabby well-dressed man in a frock coat and high hat. There are many shabby respectable well-preserved things which resemble each other. The reason why this neat and clean vehicle caught her eye was that the man who was driving it wore a white wedding-favour, which is a thing which no person of twenty can see without remark. Lottie,

like others of her age, was half amused, half interested, and could not help wondering who it was. It was going to the railway, and some one looked out hastily as Lottie passed, looking at her, the girl thought, withdrawing as hastily again when she was seen to turn her eyes that way. Who could it be? Lottie thought she would ask Law, who knew all the news, who had been married; but she had forgotten all about it long before she saw Law. She had too many things to think of and to do, to remember so small a matter as that; and Law did not come in till late. When he did come they took their simple supper together amicably, not saying much, but she forgot the question. Now that Lottie did not bully him they were very good friends. They said a few friendly words to each other, and that was all, and then they bade each other good night. They were all alone, the Captain having left home for a few days, and had a very good opportunity for talk. But Lottie did not seize the opportunity to put disagreeable questions. She was altogether so much more amicable than she had been used to be.

Three days after Capain Despard was to come home. It did not disturb Lottie that Captain Temple questioned her very closely as to where her father had gone. "Was he alone, do you know?" the old man said. "Alone? oh yes, I suppose so," said Lottie. What did it matter? She could see Rollo behind the old beech-tree. Of course it was a drawback that the Captain should be with her so often, but it pleased the kind old man; they met and they had their little talk, which perhaps was all the more unlike the common intercourse of earth, that worlds of meaning had to be trusted to a tone, to a sudden meeting in the dusk (when you could see nobody, Captain Temple said) of two pairs of eyes: and when all is unutterable, is not this as good a way of utterance as any? And then Lottie said she must go home. Papa was coming home. He had been gone three days. As they went back the old Captain was more and more kind to Lottie. He kept her at the door for a moment with her hand between his two old kind hands. "My dear, don't be afraid to send for me or to come to me when you want anything—my wife and I will always be ready to be of use to you. You will not forget, Lottie?" "Oh no, Captain Temple," she said, "you are always so kind to me; how could I forget?"—and she went in smiling to herself, wondering what he could think she would want. But he was always kind, as kind as a father; far, far kinder than her own father, she could not but remember, with a little shrug of her shoulders. Had papa come in? Mary said "No," and Lottie went into the little dining-room to see that the supper was prettily arranged. There was nothing more than cold meat, and cheese, and bread and butter; but the bouquet in the middle, which was made up of brilliantly-coloured leaves, was pretty; and the white table-cloth, and the plates and glasses looked bright. In her happiness she began to sing softly as she pulled the leaves into a prettier form in the long clear glass they were grouped in. The lamp was lighted, the table was bright, the door stood open. Lottie, through her singing, heard steps coming up the

pavement outside, and voices. All of a sudden she paused, thinking she heard her father's voice. Who could he be bringing with him, without any preparation? She cast a hasty glance at the beef, and saw with satisfaction that there would be enough for a stranger; enough, but not perhaps too much—he might have let her know. Then she heard his voice quite close to the window, which was open, for the night was warm for October—"Look, in and you will see her," he said. "Oh, I know her very well," said another voice with a laugh. Lottie turned round, with her heart beating, towards the window, where something white was visible; what could it mean?—was it a woman? *a woman* with her father at this hour of the evening? She grew pale, she could not tell why, and gazed first at the window, then at the door, with a flutter of tears which she could not understand. How foolish it was! "Come in—this way—don't be afraid! The passage is narrow and the house is small, but there is plenty of room for happiness when once you are in it," said her father's voice in the doorway, coming through the little crooked hall. Then the door was pushed wide open, and he came in leading some one by the hand. It was a woman very gaily dressed, with a mountain of brown hair and a white bonnet perched upon it, who laughed, but was nervous too; upon whom Lottie gazed with wondering eyes and blanched cheeks. Who was this whom he was bringing in without warning, without notice? The Captain was very jaunty, his hat was still on his head over his left ear. He had a bunch of violets somewhat crushed in his coat. He smiled a smile which was rather ghastly as Lottie gazed, struck dumb with the horror of what was coming. "Mrs. Despard," he said with a flourish, "let me present you with a ready-made daughter Lottie, my child, come here and welcome your new mamma."

The Centaurs.

In Two Parts.

PART II.

III.

We have thus far considered, first the tenour and then the origin of the Greek tales about the Centaurs. The place which these tales filled in ancient thought was more considerable than the place they actually hold in the ancient literature that has come down to us. It is for the most part only in Latin or late Greek writers that the stories concerning them are to be found in full. Thus Ovid makes Nestor tell, with an immense redundance of ornament and episode, the story of the battle on Mount Pelion;* the same battle is related again by Plutarch in his life of Theseus, and by the annalist Diodorus Siculus;† the slaughter on Mount Pholoê, both by Diodorus Siculus and another annalist, Apollodorus;‡ the chastisement of Nessos, and the friendship of Cheiron and Peleus, by the same Apollodorus.§ The opening books of the *Achilleïd* of Statius, which are all that have come down to us, are full of the incidents of the hero's boyhood in the cave of Cheiron; the death of Cheiron is told at length, after a fashion of his own, by Ovid;‖ and last of all, our monsters, with their ancient character quite obscured beneath an aftergrowth of Asiatic fancies, make their appearance here and there among the interminable volubilities of the epic of Nonnus.¶

But when we turn to the Greek writers of the great ages, we seldom encounter the fables of this cycle in the form of regular narrative, though in the form of incidental allusion often enough. Among the earliest epic writers of all there is said to have been one, Melisander of Miletus, who wrote a poem on the battle of the Centaurs and Lapiths; but to us Melisander is only a name.** Both in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* we find the monsters mentioned, though by their name of Centaurs only in the *Odyssey*.†† As the story of the fight is there told, it is the Centaur Eurytion who gets into trouble, in the first instance, alone. In a drunken fit he outrages the hospitality of Peirithoös, whose companions thereupon slit his nose, cut off his ears, and turn him out of doors; "and hence," adds the teller, "arose the feud between Centaurs and men." It is the

* Ov. *Metam.* xii. 182–535.
† Diod. iv. 70.
‡ Diod. iv. 13; Apollod. ii. 5, § 4.
§ Apollod. ii. 7, § 6; iii. 13, §§ 2–6.
‖ Ov. *Fast.* v. 379–414.
¶ Nonn. *Dionys.* v. 614; xiv. 193 *sqq.*; xvi. 240; xxxii. 71.
** Ælian, *Var. Hist.* xi. 2.
†† Hom. *Od.* xxi. 295.

insolent suitor Antinoös, of all people, who takes it upon himself to warn the disguised Ulysses, in his own house, against drunkenness by this example. The warning and the example afterwards became proverbial; being, for instance, imitated by Virgil when he tells how other trees besides the vine have their virtues and without the vine's danger;* by Propertius, in remonstrating with Cynthia for her love of the wine-cup and the die;† and again playfully by Horace, when he says to Varus, "Let us be merry, but not immoderate over our cups."‡ In the *Iliad* there are two allusions to the famous strife: one put into the mouth of Nestor when he seeks to magnify the heroes of his youth over those of his latter days;§ the other suggested by the prowess of those twin sons whom Peirithoös begot of Hippodameia, "on that same day when he took vengeance on the shaggy brutes."‖ Of Cheiron, as the friend of Peleus and teacher of Achilles, the *Iliad*, as we have seen, makes mention several times;¶ and the same Cheiron is an especial favourite with Pindar. In one ode he relates how the god Apollo, having come to the forests of Pelion for love of a forest huntress, Kyrênê, daughter of the Lapith king Hypseus, finds her wrestling unarmed with a lion before the cave of Cheiron, and calls Cheiron from his cave to admire the great-heartedness of the maiden; and, affecting not to know who she is, asks him concerning her lineage and whether he may seek her love. To which the Centaur answers with a smile, and foretells the issue of their loves.** In a second ode Pindar tells to what "heroic child's play" Cheiron accustomed the tender years of Achilles;†† and in a third, how Jason, when he goes to claim his own at Iolkos, and the people throng round him in the market-place to gaze upon his beauty, replies proudly to the questions of the supplanter Pelias, that he is the pupil of Cheiron and comes from the cave where he has been nurtured by Chariklo and Phillyra.‡‡ Concerning the other Centaurs, Pindar gives an account of their birth and generation in which he says that they were sprung, not direct—according to the usual account—from the embrace of Ixion and the cloud, but from the union of Kentauros, the abominable son of that embrace, with the mares of the Magnesian hills.§§

Passing to the literature of the Attic age we know how, in the *Trachiniæ* of Sophocles, Deïaneira is made to tell at some length the story of her adventure with Nessos at the ford;‖‖ and generally, it is in connection with the deeds of Hercules that we find the monsters mentioned by the tragic writers,¶¶ except in the *Iphigeneia in Aulis*, where

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* Virg. *Georg.* ii. 455 *sqq.*
† Prop. ii. 24, 31.
‡ Hor. *Od.* i. 18, 7.
§ Hom. *Il.* i. 262 *sqq.*
‖ Hom. *Il.* ii. 741 *sqq.*
¶ Hom. *Il.* xi. 832; xvi. 140 *sqq.*; xix. 387 *sqq.*
** Pind. *Pyth.* ix. 9–66.
†† Pind. *Nem.* iii. 64 *sqq.*
‡‡ Pind. *Pyth.* iv. 101.
§§ Pind. *Pyth.* ii. 44 *sqq.*
‖‖ Soph. *Trach.* 555 *sqq.* ¶¶ *e.g.* Soph. *Trach.* Eur. *Herc. Fur*, 181 *sqq.*, 364 *sqq.*

the marriage of Peleus and Thetis in the cave of Cheiron is related by Agamemnon when he is pretending to desire that the son of that marriage, Achilles, shall wed his own daughter Iphigeneia, and again by the Chorus, who contrast the happiness of that famous day with the misery of the mock-marriage day preparing for Iphigeneia on the strand of Aulis. By Aristophanes the proverbial manners of the Centaurs are glanced at in the comedy of the *Frogs*, where the slave Xanthias knocks at the door of Hercules to inquire the way to Hades, and Hercules from within asks who it is that knocks so *centaurically*, meaning obstreperously.* And, in the same vein, the unknown writer of the little piece called *The Furnace*, or *The Potters*, invoking vengeance on all dishonest potters, says, "May Cheiron and his brawling troop come and smash your furnace and destroy your wares."† Among Attic historians, Xenophon, in the true vein of an old soldier turned country gentleman, begins his treatise on hunting by extolling the discipline of Cheiron, and telling over the names of all the famous heroes of old time who had profited by it, in order to recommend a like discipline to the young men of his own day.‡ And among orators, Isokrates, in his declamation in honour of Helen, speaks of the monsters as having threatened the civilisation of Greece until Theseus exterminated them.§

One mode in which reference to the Centaurs is particularly common both in early classical literature and late, is in the description of works of art where they are represented. Such works are sometimes imaginary and sometimes real. Of the imaginary kind is the Shield of Hercules, as described in the Hesiodic poem so entitled; whereon, among other scenes, is a fight of Centaurs and Lapiths, with the figures wrought of silver and the weapons of gold—the weapons of the men being swords and those of the monsters their usual mountain pines.‖ Among real works of ancient art in which the Centaurs figured, Pausanias describes the chest of Kypselos, a famous piece of archaic carving and chasing dedicated in the temple of Hêrê at Olympia;¶ the reliefs on the throne of Apollo at Amyklai; at Athens, the paintings of Mikon in the temple of Theseus,** the minute reliefs round the edges of the sandals of the gold and ivory Athênê of Phidias in the Parthenon,†† the other reliefs wrought in metal by the chaser Mys on the second great Athênê by Phidias on the Acropolis, the bronze Athênê Promachos;‡‡ besides those famous marble sculptures of the Attic school which have been preserved to our own time, and of which we shall have by-and-by to speak. To the class of real descriptions belongs also Pliny's of a group by Arkesilas and an embossed gold cup by Akragas of Rhodes,§§ and pre-

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* Aristoph. *Ran.* 38.
‡ Xen. *Cyneg.* i.
‖ Hes. *Scut. Herc.* 178 *sqq.*
** Paus. iii. 18 § 7.
‡‡ Paus. i. 28 § 2.
† Hom. *Kaminos*, 17 *sqq.*
§ Isokr. *Helena.*
¶ Paus. v. 17, 18, 19.
†† Paus. i. 17 § 2.
§§ Plin. *Nat. Hist.* xxxvi. 4; xxxiii. 1.

bably also Lucian's account of a copy which he professes to have seen after a painting by Zeuxis;* while concerning some other such accounts of the late rhetoricians, we can hardly tell whether they are drawn from fact or fancy.†

It is, in truth, in the works of art rather than in those of literature, that we can even now most fully study the Centaurs. Some go so far as to say that the fable, as we know it, is actually of art's creation, and was thrown into form by sculptors and painters for their own convenience. The composite shape of the man-horse, say these critics, was not original to the Centaurs, but was in course of time established for them by the artists; the original Centaur having been imagined only as a kind of savage man of the woods, like the Wildman of the Middle Ages. Homer, they urge, calls the Centaurs brutes, or shaggy brutes, but nowhere asserts that they are four-legged; Pindar, when he talks of a Kentauros who was sire to the men-horses, but himself of human shape, points to an earlier stage of the myth, when the man-horses were not yet invented; and lastly, it is comparatively late that we first find the composite shape clearly specified by the use of the word *Hippocentaur*. The answer is, that Homer's word *brute* is the same that was afterwards used by Sophocles, and naturally implies, if it does not express, four-leggedness; that it is for the very sake of explaining how the Centaurs were born four-legged, that Pindar supplies an intervening generation between them and Ixion; and that the word Hippocentaur is not a poetical but a prose word, a word of precision, which would not have been used by early writers. The whole contention to which we refer springs, indeed, from a dogma—the dogma that monsters absolutely formed no part of the native and primitive conceptions of the Greeks.‡ This view was an improvement on the earlier view, which willingly accepted as Greek all the depravations of the confused and Asianized religions of the Roman empire; but it was exaggerated; and the truth is, as we have seen, that in the Greek imagination monsters did hold an essential and significant, although a subordinate, place. By the myth-making genius of the race, like the other fables of Greece, the fable of the Centaurs will have been created and thrown into form; but by art it was early taken up and late laid down, and it so happens that scarcely any other ancient myth remains illustrated down to our own day by such a variety of monuments of the highest class.

Allowing, then, that a Centaur was from the first imagined as a man-horse, we find, as we should expect, that the earliest art is clumsy and uncertain in its realisation of that figure. The forepart of the creature is at first represented as a complete man, legs and all, and the

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* Lucian, *Zeux.* § 3–7. † Philostratus, *Imagg.* ii. 2, 3; Callistratus, *Statt.* xii.

‡ The great exponent of this doctrine was Voss in his *Mythologische Briefe;* and he was followed by many other scholars; his view with reference to the Centaurs in especial still keeping its place in our classical dictionaries.

brute element is added in the shape of a horse's trunk and hinder parts inartificially stuck on, and growing, as it were, out of the human back. Pausanias notices that the Centaurs were thus figured in the reliefs of wood and metal on the chest of Kypselos, a very ancient piece of Corinthian workmanship. That the Etruscans attributed this form to a Centaur of their own mythology, Marês, we learn expressly from Ælian.* Hence it is possible that the influence of the Etruscans, who were the oldest and most skilful workers in bronze, and also the great purchasers of the painted vases manufactured in the potteries of Greece, may have had something to do with the prevalence of this type of Centaur in early Greek work. At any rate the type is not uncommon. We have it in little bronze statuettes, one of them found, not in Etruria, but on the Acropolis at Athens: † in a few ancient gems; in many of the painted vases discovered at Volci and Chiusi; ‡ and, lastly, in those Centaurs, if Centaurs they are, which we find beaten out in relief on some gold ornaments from Kameiros in Rhodes, now in the British Museum; these last seem to be of Phœnician date and workmanship, and bear the mixed character partly of Greek Centaurs and partly of Assyrian bulls, with a treatment of the head and hair resembling the Egyptian. This archaic type of Centaur afflicts the mind with a grotesque sense of helplessness in the creature, his fore and hinder parts being obviously incapable of co-operation; and nothing is quainter than to see a procession of such creatures, upon the neck or body of some early vase, ineptly hop and flourish their incompatible limbs. Nevertheless, the treatment survives the immaturity of art so far as one particular subject is concerned. Until at least the end of the fifth century, it is the traditional mode of representing Cheiron, probably because the sacred and beneficent character of that exceptional monster made artists unwilling to mulct him, like the rest of his kind, of his humanity from the waist down. At any rate he figures, in the old way, as an aged man in full drapery with the horse-part merely appended, in vase-paintings not only of the primitive but of the perfect age.§

Meanwhile the other and more judicious manner of representing a Centaur, as a complete horse, only terminating from the chest and withers in the body and head of a man, had been long ago employed for other subjects. It is a mistake to say, as is commonly said, that this manner only came in with the school of Phidias. We possess at least two archaic monuments of the first importance, the date of which it is scarcely possible to suppose later than 600 B.C., wherein Centaurs appear in full possession of their equine nature and activity. One of

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* Ælian, *Hist. Var.* ix. 16. † Müller, *Denkmäler*, pl. xlvii. 591, 592.

‡ Micali, 95, *Mon. Ined.* pl. xxxvi. &c.

§ Of the early style, the British Museum contains an admirable example, from the Blacas Collection; and of the mature style, one was lately sold in Paris.—(*Catalogue de la Collection de M.* *)

these is a fine series of early sculptured reliefs from the island of Assos, now in the Louvre ;* here, along with a combat of Hercules and Triton, and with several combats of wild beasts, we have a row of galloping Centaurs of the completed type. The other example is the famous François-vase, discovered at Chiusi by the French explorer of that name, and now in the Museum at Florence.† The paintings of this vase furnish the best existing instance of that kind and period of Greek design to which the reliefs of the chest of Kypselos are supposed also to have belonged ; they consist of tier above tier of mythologic subjects, packed as close as the surface of the vase will accommodate them, and primitively drawn, with outlined profiles harsh and rigid to comicality, but full of vigour and expression ; the figures in all cases, and in many also the natural objects, having their names written beside them for the purchaser's information. In one of these tiers is figured the battle of Centaurs and Lapiths, with the overwhelming of Kaineus ; and in another the procession of the gods to the wedding feast of Peleus and Thetis. Early as is the work, the fighting Centaurs have here the complete bodies of horses, and their proper weapons of stones and pine-branches. In the wedding procession, Cheiron marches beside the messenger of the gods, Iris, and is followed by his wife Chariklo, walking in company with Hestia and Dêmêter ; he carries over his shoulder, as always, the pine-branch with small game slung from its boughs ; but the shape of his lower limbs is not clearly to be made out.

In this art of vase-painting, which was essentially an art for circulating and popularising in ancient households the favourite tales of the gods and heroes, the Centaurs figure both early and late. The subjects chosen by the draughtsman are almost always, of the Thessalian cycle, the battle at the wedding-feast of Peirithoös, or else the child Achilles brought to the cave of Cheiron ; and of the Hercules cycle, the vengeance of that hero upon Nessos, or else his interrupted supper in the cave of Pholos. Good specimens of all four of these subjects are to be found in the vase-rooms of the British Museum. A fine *crater* of the Alexandrian age ‡ shows on one side the Centaur Asbolos, long-haired and ivy-crowned, driving the stubby root of a pine-tree into the chest of the armed Lapith Hoplos, who bleeds and sinks ; and on the other, Theseus aiming a spear-thrust at Asbolos, while Kaineus, buried up to the waist in stones, finds strength to stab one of the two Centaurs, Agrios and Petraios, who are overwhelming him. The Nurture of Achilles, from the Blacas Collection, is an example of the precise and careful early manner : the child, much too small as usual, is carried seated in the outstretched hands of his father ; Cheiron, like a kindly pedagogue, advances, shouldering the usual pine, to welcome him ; be-

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* *Mon. del Inst.* vol. iv. pl. xxxiv. † Ibid. pl. liv. lv. lvi. lvii. lviii.

‡ Catalogue of Second Vase-room, 1266.

tween him and his visitors there stands a tree, and near the foot of the tree, a dog. More usually the child Achilles is represented as walking, with a hoop or other plaything, and holding up his hands in surprise at the strange figure of his tutor. Still finer is a British Museum amphora of Hercules and Nessos;* the successive moments of the action are brought, in the manner of Greek art, symbolically together; the piebald Centaur lifts his hand in insult, Deïaneira holds out hers in appeal for help, and Hercules, in one group with these, brings his club crashing down on the offender's head. In other representations, the weapons of Hercules are, as the tale properly requires, arrows; and we often see the father of Deïaneira standing by, with Hermes and Athênê, the patrons of Hercules among the Gods. Hermes, in the character of friend and patron, is thus seated beside Hercules in the quaint Pholos picture on another and more archaic amphora;† where Pholos, with the usual long hair and pointed beard, but with the unusual feature of human ears, has just come in from hunting; from the bough over his shoulder hang a hare, fox, and bird, and by his side walks a tame deer; he and his heroic guest are in the act of shaking hands. This is a favourite subject with the vase-painters of the relatively early or rigid time, and other versions show it us in other stages; how the guest and host debate whether the lid shall be taken off the wine-jar; how the lid is taken off, and Hercules dips his cup; how hereupon the Centaurs come clattering and threatening; how they fall before the avenging shafts.‡

Nearly the same choice of subjects prevails in engraved gems, though in these the myth occurs comparatively seldom. But turning to the greater forms of art, and especially in art's greatest age—the age of Perikles—we find that all other episodes of the myth give way to one alone. The Centaurs, for the Athenian of that age, mean those monsters who were turned to flight by mortals upon Mount Pelion, and among mortals chiefly by the Athenian hero Theseus. The sculptors of the school of Phidias had double cause, both as patriots and as craftsmen, for delighting in that exploit above almost all others. In the pride of patriotism those generations lived and moved. Since the Athenians scattered the hordes of Asia, their spirits were buoyed and carried forward on a great wave of exultation, the exultation of victories the most astounding and the most beneficent ever won by man; and if that wave too soon broke, if politically its force was too soon shattered in confusion and disaster, still it had lasted long enough to sustain their genius to the goal of art—they had completed the commemoration of their glories before their glories failed them. The achievements of the Athenian artists under Perikles were at once a vast memorial and a vast thank-offering, inspired wholly by the triumphant memory of the Persian wars

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* Catalogue of First Vase-room, 537. † Ibid. 538.

‡ Gerhard, *Auserlesene Vasenbilder*, vol. ii. pl. cxix. cxx.

and the part which Athens had borne in them. Only the manner in which Greek art prefers to commemorate great events is not by direct historical representation; instead of the event itself, the artist represents some divine or heroic story in which the event may be taken to have been symbolised and foreshadowed. Such an ideal prototype of the overthrow of the barbarians by the Greeks at Marathon, Artemision, Salamis, Platæa, Mycalê, seemed the overthrow of the Centaurs by the Lapiths on Mount Pelion.

And this being the spiritual and imaginative meaning of this subject for the school of Phidias, the technical and æsthetic grounds of their predilection for it are not less apparent. The delight of the Greeks in the figure, strength, and motion of a horse is as old as the famous similes of Homer; and we have the actual expressions of one of their most famous painters in praise of cavalry subjects, "with steeds, some galloping, some rearing, some kicking; and riders, some launching their weapons, and some wounded and falling." * In the Centaurs the fusion of steed and rider gave an opportunity for uniting the animal and human actions in one, and, far from shocking imaginations familiar with the idea, furnished an opportunity for the exercise of a skill upon which the ancient critics are never tired of dilating, in effecting the transition, alike in modelling, colour, and integuments, of the trunk of man into the withers and the chest and shoulders of a horse. The six-limbed creature so compounded suggests, in conflict with the four-limbed creature, man, innumerable varieties and combinations of action: wrestlings, grapplings, swinging of victims on to shoulder and crupper, rearings and batterings of hoof on shield, lashings out with the hind legs while the hands grapple and the teeth bite a foe, turnings round to slash at one attacking from the rear, heavings of huge stones upon one who kneels, strugglings of the seized to escape and of the seizer to keep hold, foil and fence of weaker skill against clumsier strength, overbearings and succumbings, entanglements, clutchings, rescues. In all these the sculptor, and especially the sculptor of temple ornaments in relief—where sculpture has something of the scope and freedom of painting, finds an appropriate and inexhaustible stimulus to invention. In the faces of these semi-bestial shapes he may allow himself, in any degree of intensity, what in the representation of free-born and self-respecting Greeks he may scarcely allow himself at all, and still less in the representation of the ever-living gods, the expression of the lower feelings—as pain, ferocity, despair. It is by the study of the compositions of this class that we learn how little those gifts of tranquillity and high reserve, which we rightly think of as the ruling gifts of Greek art in its great days, exclude, when occasion calls for them, the opposite gifts of transcendent vehemence and fire. The heads of some of the Centaurs, both of the Parthenon metopes and of the Olympic pediment, in which the leer of drunken lust passes into the contractions of

* Nikias, as quoted by Demetrius Phalereus, περὶ Ἑρμην. 76.

wounded agony, are not exceeded in fierce intensity of expression by any work of the modern, the properly expressional, schools.

Rightly to fill the given spaces, as well as to give the look of equality between the combatants, the heads of the monsters have to be on about the same level with those of the men, so that their equine part is really of no more than pony stature; but one does not for this feel in them any lack of power and formidableness. The type of the creature, in its human part, is debased, and approaches that of the Satyrs; bush-bearded and mat-haired, with the ears, usually, of horses or goats half concealed by shagginess, with snub-nose and bulging puckered brows, wrinkled, thick-lipped, coarse-grained, muscular, and fierce. The highest point in art's treatment is reached in the famous groups of the western pediment of the temple of Zeus at Olympia, the work of a scholar and rival of Phidias, Alkamenes. These groups have been recovered within the last two years, by the enterprise of German excavators, from the soil in which they lay, and are preserved for the most part in astonishing freshness. Crouched in either angle of the pediment lay the figure of a nymph of the soil, its permanent and untroubled spirit, watching without emotion the turmoil of the hour. Between them raged the battle: the bride a figure of heroic stature and power, and maintaining her virginal heroism even in surrender, as her head sinks on her breast, and, still striving to free her bosom from the invading hands, she is forced helpless from the ground in the iron grasp of horse's leg and human arms at once; the ravisher a marvel of uncouth strength and drunken truculence; other maidens and youths of the Lapiths seized and swung from earth in like manner; the ravishers, some of them wounded, but still holding by their prey: heroes striking fiercely in defence, and foremost among them Theseus and Peirithoös; women-slaves overthrown and crouching, with faces of unchecked dismay and terror; while calm in the midst steps forth Apollo, advancing to the succour of his own. The Athenian sculptor thus adorned the chief temple of Zeus, the god of the universal Greeks, in his holiest sanctuary Olympia, with sculptures expressly typical above all things of Athenian prowess. In the rear or western chamber of the temple, Herodotus, if tales are true,* had first read to the assembled people his newly-written histories recounting the might of Asia and her overthrow; and it was above the entrance of this self-same chamber that Alkamenes presently set up his marble history symbolic of the same world-redeeming defeat. His sculptures, carried out no doubt under his own eye by local workmen of imperfect training, have nothing like the beauty and perfection of technical execution which we find in work of the same kind done at Athens itself; but in invention they are overwhelming alike by nobility and force. In England, however, they can be studied only by the help of casts and photographs; whereas, out of three other series of sculptures by the school of Phidias that represent the

* Lucian, *Herodotus.*

same subject, two are our own in the originals, and can be studied in the British Museum by all who please. These are, the metopes of the Parthenon, not complete, but constituting nevertheless an important part of the Elgin marbles, and the frieze from the temple of Apollo near Phigaleia in Arcadia, bought by the English Government in 1813. Each Parthenon metope is a group of two figures in high relief on a single square slab; and each, therefore, a separate study of action between monster and victim or monster and foe. The battle loses its commotion and connectedness by this isolation of the groups, and the groups themselves vary greatly in maturity of style and skill of work; but the best are unsurpassable in the combined qualities of nobly conceived action, consummate chiselling of the marble, and expressive character of the heads. It is probable, but not perfectly certain, that the Parthenon carvings were finished before Phidias went with his scholars from Athens to work at Olympia, and therefore that these metopes are earlier than the pediment groups of Alkamenes; it is certain that both are earlier than the frieze of Phigaleia. This frieze ran, not round the outside of the temple, but round its internal opening, and represented, in more than half its length, a battle of Greeks and Amazons, and in the remainder the battle of Lapiths and Centaurs, with Apollo and Artemis coming to the rescue on a car drawn by stags. In this famous work we find, with somewhat clumsy and unrefined types, an almost excessive exuberance, fire, and flutter; there is no end to the complicated and violent motives of stabbing, tearing, and plunging, of dramatic victory, defeat, and suspense. There still remain, from the same school, the defaced reliefs of the temple of Theseus at Athens; and of some of these also, particularly the overwhelming of Kaineus, there are to be seen casts in the Elgin Room at the British Museum.

In the pediment of Olympia, then, on the metopes of the Parthenon, on the frieze of Phigaleia, on the frieze of the Theseum, on the lost paintings within the same temple, on the shield of the lost bronze goddess of the Acropolis, on the sandals of the lost gold and ivory goddess of the Parthenon, in some part or other of every great scheme of religious and heroic art which the Athenians of that age produced, this battle of these old heroes and monsters had its place. The Centaurs had found their consecration in the service of a great national and ethical ideal. For every gross clutch laid by the monsters on Lapith youth or maiden, the Athenian thought of his own homes and shrines profaned, of his city burned and fields laid waste; when he gazed on that frantic uncertain struggle between man-brute and man, he remembered the desperate days while fate still held the balance trembling between the barbarian and the Greek; in Theseus he beheld Themistokles and the other captains by whose help, under the avenging gods, the victory had been gained at last. But the ebb of all such high emotions was at hand. The Peloponnesian war had begun before the last of those great works was finished, and the Peloponnesian war was the breaking of the wave; in it the old ideals

were shattered, the old triumphant consciousness of Athens obscured, her old illusions lost, her sense of national greatness tarnished in defeat and revolution; and, with the decay of her polity, her art lost, not its perfection, but its height of purpose. The old mythic themes were partly discontinued, or they were kept up as exercises of artistic ingenuity, of dramatic, graceful, or sportive invention, by schools out of which the earnestness had faded with the fading of the patriotic spirit. Nothing illustrates better the suddenness and completeness of the change than the destiny which was reserved in art, after the monumental uses of which we have spoken, for the Centaurs. The painter Zeuxis, whose career seems to have begun during the course of the Peloponnesian war, was famous for his graceful innovations and pleasant fancies in the new spirit. One of his pictures was a family group of Centaur, she-Centaur, and baby-Centaurs; the female and babies of the species being inventions of his own, and inventions, of course, wholly out of keeping with the ancient myth. The description of the picture by Lucian, or rather of a copy of it (the original having been carried away by Sulla, and sunk at sea), reads like some over-dainty and over-trivial piece of modern word-painting. On a bed of the softest grass, he says, you see the mother-Centaur stretched, raising her woman's body a little on her elbow, and with her horse's forefeet doubled as if about to rise. She is a nursing mother according to both natures, and is giving suck to both her young at once, their sire looking on the while from behind a rock, smiling, and dangling in one hand a lion's cub to please them. The skill of the painter, the happy and harmonious juncture of the two natures in each case, the fine contrast between the man and the woman Centaur, Lucian says that he can never praise enough; the former being all wild and shagged, and, in spite of his paternal good-humour, looking animal, mountain-bred, and untamed; the latter being of Thessalian mares the fleetest and most proudly bred, and at the same time of women the loveliest in all things but this, that her ears are pointed like a satyr's.

Quite in the same spirit is the sentimental passage in Ovid's account of the battle on Mount Pelion, where he tells of the sad end in that affray of the beautiful Centaur-lovers, Cyllarus and Hylonomê. In the same spirit, again, are two descriptions, whether real or imaginary we cannot tell, in the "Picture Gallery" of the rhetorician Philostratus. First we have the Nurture of Achilles, depicted, not with the simplicity of the old vases, but with the richest ingenuities of episode. The critic dilates on the beauty and warlike promise of the boy Achilles, with his golden hair "not unstirred" in the wind, and his short cloak, the gift of his mother, coloured flame-colour, purple and blue. He has just run down a fawn, and comes to Cheiron to ask for his prize of honey-comb and apples—so painted, we are told, that you seem to perceive their very fragrance. In the distance (as in old Italian pictures) is represented a second episode, that of Cheiron with Achilles mounted and learning to ride upon his back. The next picture is of a family group,

more complicated than that of Zeuxis. "You never knew, did you," asks the writer, "that the Centaurs of Mount Pelion had families like themselves? Well, you may learn it from this picture"—and he goes on to describe an ash-grown forest-glade, where Centaur women and children are at play; the women beautiful above, like the whitest of nymphs or amazons, and beneath like white or black or chestnut mares; while the young have their hoofs still tender and hair just sprouting; some of them wriggle out of their swaddling clothes, some are crying and others jolly, some peacefully suckling, and others clambering about their mothers; some again, beginning to be saucy and throwing stones at their mothers.

There is a gem in the Blacas Collection at the British Museum which probably contains a direct reminiscence of the work of Zeuxis; but by far the most interesting example which has come down to us of a purely romantic and fanciful treatment of the theme in later art, is the mosaic picture famous under the name of the Marefoschi mosaic, and now in the museum at Berlin.* This was discovered in the villa of Hadrian at Tivoli, in 1779, and, after adventures which are a romance in themselves—it lay a long while bricked away, for one thing, under a stable floor to hide it from the French—and after the repairs consequent on these adventures, it still remains among the noblest mosaic designs in existence. A pair of Centaurs, man and wife, are at war with wild beasts (a lion, tiger, and leopard) in a rocky glade; the tiger has slain the female Centaur, and is tearing her with his huge paws; he turns round snarling from his prey, for the avenger is upon him in the shape of the man-Centaur, who has just slain his lion enemy, and now stands rearing behind the tiger, uplifting in both hands a huge stone to overwhelm him. The leopard looks on sulkily from a neighbouring rock. We cannot tell the exact state of this mosaic; but in the large and splendid drawing, the fine expressions of the dead and baffled beasts, the pathos of the slain woman-Centaur's relaxed limbs, the mixture of wrath, pity, and despair in the avenger, it is worthy of the best ages of art.

Most of our readers will be familiar with another striking example of the fanciful treatment of the theme, found also in Hadrian's Villa, and also of the Roman time—the pair of Centaur statues carved by Aristeas and Papias, sculptors of Aphrodisias in Caria. The original, or probably the original, pair are in the museum of the Capitol at Rome, and we are enabled to complete their attributes by the help of a second version of each, existing one at the Louvre, and the other at the Vatican. One Centaur of the pair is old, and the other young, and each was bestridden and governed by a Cupid; the younger carries his rider with jollity and glee, the other is plagued by him, and throws back his head with an expression imitating, as has been justly said, that of Laokoon in

* *Mon. del Inst.* vol. iv. pl. xxxv.

his agony. The pair thus set forth an allegory of the diverse effects of love on youth and age. A pine-stem in the one case, a vine-branch and syrinx in the other, are the emblems of Bacchus, and seem to show that the love by which the monsters are subdued is love concomitant with wine.

Not merely to the fanciful or sentimental cycle, but to the Bacchanalian cycle proper, belong the vast majority of the Centaur subjects of Roman and Græco-Roman art. We cannot trace the exact process by which the creatures became adopted into the following of that god, to which assuredly they did not at first belong. The adoption no doubt ensued by reason of their forest nature and fantastic shape, by which they bear a kind of natural affinity to the Satyrs and Sileni, as well as from that love of wine which was fabled in the first instance probably as a part of their general unruliness. The earliest hint in literature of their new character is, I think, in the *Iphigeneia in Aulis*, the last play of Euripides, where the chorus says how the Centaurs came in a Bacchanalian rout (*thiasos*, the technical word) to the wedding-feast of Peleus and to the cups of the god. Later, we are told that the famous wine-jar of the Arcadian Centaurs was the gift of Bacchus to Pholos.* In art the earliest sign of this character occurs when, as on some of the vases which we have described, a Centaur is found wearing a wreath of ivy, or when a Bacchanalian subject occurs on the reverse of the same vase with a Centaur subject. One vase only, of the very latest type, shows a Centaur actually bearing the Bacchic torch, and preceded by a Faun bearing the thyrsus. The character only becomes common, becomes, indeed, universal, about the first century before our era. Thenceforth the creatures are regularly shown tamed as beasts of burden to the will of Bacchus, drawing his and Ariadne's car when they are translated from Naxos to the skies, or harnessed for the conquest of India; lowering their necks patiently to the yoke, or anon charging and striking for the god against his enemies; ridden by laughing nymphs whom they have picked up and swung harmlessly on to the crupper, companioned, bestridden, handcuffed, and anon belaboured by thyrsus-bearing or cymbal-playing Fauns and Mænads; prancing, tippling, and making merry, and having learnt at last to be inoffensive and unpunished in their cups. These representations occur in all forms and varieties of Græco-Roman art: the chariot of Bacchus and Ariadne, for instance, with a team of two Centaurs and two Centauresses, on a great and famous cameo at Florence; a procession with Satyrs and Centaurs on the frieze of a temple discovered by the Society of Dilettanti at Teos in Asia Minor. But they occur most frequently in works of two special kinds particularly: in the wall-paintings of Herculaneum and Tibur, and on the sculptured friezes of sarcophagi; in the wall-paintings principally in sportive pairs and single groups, some of them of great loveliness (for instance, the famous set of four found in the so-called Villa of Cicero); on the sarcophagus reliefs in crowded skir-

* *Schol. ad Theocr.* vii. 149.

mishings or processions. To consider these in detail would be beyond our scope: they possess the charm of the expiring classic spirit, and are things of beauty in their measure, but in no sense things of greatness or even of individuality, and one is not inwardly different from another.

IV.

Such, then, in the imagination and the art of antiquity, were the Centaurs. That rationalists took pains to disprove their existence as early as the time of Plato, we know from the *Phædrus*, where Socrates speaks of such pains as thrown away.* Afterwards we find Lucretius,† and afterwards again Galen,‡ repeating the same pains; Cicero speaks of their conception as an acknowledged absurdity,§ and Virgil relegates the Centaurs, with Scylla, Hydra, Chimæra, and the rest of their tribe, as phantoms to the house of dreams at the entrance of Tartarus.‖ Sceptical philosophers used the creature as the type of things non-existent and incapable of existing; ¶ versifiers derided it in broad epigrams; ** and still it did not perish. In the time of the Emperor Claudius there was forthcoming ocular proof of its reality, though only as a marvel and sport of nature. That emperor had written, in one of the literary essays of his youth, how a monster of this kind had been born in Thessaly, and died in the same day; and it was probably to flatter him that some provincial governor sent to Rome, after he had come to the throne, what purported to be a Centaur preserved in honey. The creature had been caught, it was said, on a high mountain in Arabia, and despatched, as a present to the emperor, by way of Egypt, but dying on the way, had been embalmed. Arriving in this condition, the preserved specimen, whatever it was, after having been for some time publicly exhibited in the palace, had been stowed away in the store-rooms, and there seen by one of the writers who tells the tale.†† And again, in Christian days, we heard how the existence of such monsters was attested by holy fathers of the Church, since St. Anthony had met a Centaur in the desert, and, crossing himself, had asked it the way, to which it had answered in strange accents and fled away.

As creatures of imagination, they continued to be familiar to a much later time; neither can we ourselves quite forget them if we would; since Cheiron, at least, holds his place in heaven among the constellations, and his memory lingers on earth in the name of a plant, centaury. At the head of medical writings, from Byzantine manuscripts down to treatises printed within the last two hundred years, it is not unusual to see the same twy-formed Cheiron figured as the mythic founder and patron of the art. And no less a man than Newton, taking the name if not the

* Plat. *Phædr.* 229 D.
† Lucr. v. 878, &c.
‡ Gal. *de Usu Partium*, iii. 1, p. 330.
§ Cic. *de Nat. Deor.* ii. 2.
‖ Virg. *Æn.* vi. 485 *sqq.*
¶ Sext. Empiric. *Hypotyp.* i. § 4, &c. &c.
** *Anthol.* i. 4, 9.
†† Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* vii. 3, and Phlegon of Tralles.

figure of Cheiron seriously, endeavoured, on the hint of a late classic writer, to prove that he was a father, among the ancients, not only of medicine but of astronomy, and that he had framed a calendar for the use of the Argonauts.

Throughout the art and fancy of the Middle Age and Renaissance, Centaurs in general appear and re-appear in unexpected fashions.* A pair of them are wrought in bronze, with other figures of which the meaning and relations are obscure, on the side-doors of the cathedral at Augsburg, a rude but interesting work of the eleventh century. They seem to have been adopted into Christian art about this time as symbols of evil passion and temptation; partly, it may be, from some vague reminiscence of their original character; partly, perhaps, from that apparition to Saint Anthony in the wilderness; and partly because Virgil, and following Virgil Statius, had written of them as fiends or phantoms haunting the gates of Tartarus and kingdom of the dead.† They are represented in mediæval art almost always as armed with bows and arrows, the fiery shafts of the devil, which they shoot sometimes at men, sometimes at lions, signifying in this latter case the warfare of the passions with one another. They figure thus on the bronze doors of not a few other churches besides that of Augsburg, both in Germany and France, and notably on those of the famous Romanesque church of St. Trophime at Arles. Exceptional subjects among the carved ornaments of churches are she-Centaurs and their young, as in the Liebfrauenkirche at Halberstadt. Giotto, with his usual justice of imagination, introduces a centaur as a type of unruliness in one of his great symbolical frescoes, that of Obedience, painted in honour of St. Francis in the lower church of Assisi. Giotto may have had the hint from Dante, and we all know what use Dante, for his own part, made of the fable. Following Virgil and Statius, and remembering at the same time the earlier Greek tales, he turns the swift brutes (*fiere snelle*) to splendid account in the character of avenging hell-fiends.‡ These violent ones are set to punish crimes like their own; and Dante and his companion find a troop of them galloping round that lake of blood in which blood-guilty souls are plunged eternally; their weapons are bows and arrows—

Even as they went forth armed to hunt on earth—

and they are charged to draw their arrows against any who seek to lift themselves from the lake of torment. Dante's guide points out to him, as the chiefs of the band, our old friends Cheiron, Pholos, and Nessos; and Nessos is made to escort the two poets along the bank, telling them whose are the souls they see in pain, until they come to a shallow place, where Nessos carries Dante over on his crupper, while Virgil floats over as a disembodied spirit, unhelped. Of these Centaurs turned hell-fiends,

* The best account of their use in mediæval art will be found in that invaluable book, Piper, *Mythologie der christlichen Kunst*. Weimar, 1847.

† Stat. *Sylv.* v. 3, 280.

‡ In the twelfth canto of the *Inferno*.

Florentine art, in the hands of Sandro Botticelli, has given a singularly innocent and fanciful representation in those rare and famous little engravings designed for the 1481 edition of Dante. A still rarer engraving of the same early school, which is exhibited in the Print-room of the British Museum, gives a beautiful version of these and other figures of the Bacchanalian cycle, adapted directly from an antique sarcophagus. We may remember that the sarcophagus of Cortona, newly discovered in Brunelleschi's days, and which he walked from Florence to that city and back on purpose to draw, represented a fight, in which Centaurs are engaged on the side of Bacchus against his foes.

During the whole period of the fresh or early Renaissance, the creatures are in one form or another thus repeated again and again, partly from antiquarian zest, and partly in the old moral and Christian significance, modified according to place and time. To take only typical instances: there are the reliefs of Jacopo della Quercia on the font of the Baptistery at Siena, where Hercules slaying a Centaur stands for the triumph of good over evil, and serves as a counterpart to David slaying the lion. In the same city, one of the finest compartments of the figured pavement of the Cathedral is that representing the Massacre of the Innocents by Matteo da Siena, and here, a characteristic feature among the enrichments of Herod's palace-court, we have grim medallions of Centaur and nymph. There is the noble allegorical picture of Andrea Mantegna in the Louvre, in which an armed Minerva and the Virtues drive out the Vices, and these Vices, floundering in retreat through their slough, are personified by various hideous shapes, and among them by shapes of Centaurs. Lastly, the satiric spirit of the approaching Reformation turns the monsters to account, and among the carvings above the choir-stalls of the Cathedral of Basel we find Centaurs whose human parts are fashioned in the grotesque likeness of bishops, nuns, and greedy friars.

Drawing later down the course of history, as Pagan mythology loses its fascination and Christian symbolism its popular vigour, and as at the same time monsters of all kinds become discredited, even in fancy, by modern lights, the Centaur tends to disappear from art. If he survives at all in our own day, it is incidentally and in the humblest service. The name Centaur for a ship is as old as Virgil,* and it may be from some reminiscence of an ancient custom that we catch sight now and again of such a creature roughly painted on the sail of some Venetian felucca; the state galley of old Venice, as we all know, was the Bucentaur or Ox-centaur. Among ourselves, I think, the Centaur scarcely survives at all, except in the guise, for which the distribution of his weight adapts him well, of a tin monster on a weathercock. When next the reader has occasion to watch him pinned and twirling in the gust at that inglorious elevation, may he feel the kindlier towards him for these notices of his former significance and fame.

S. C.

* Virg. *Æn.* v. 122.

Runeberg.

At the opening of the present century the monarchy of Sweden lay defenceless and almost moribund, supported in European opinion solely by the memory of its vast prestige. The dynasty of Wasa, which had held the crown for nearly two centuries, and from the hands of whose successive kings Sweden had received such matchless glory and such a world of sorrows, was approaching its last degeneracy in the person of Gustavus IV., a prim and melancholy bigot, touched with madness, and retaining of the iron will and clear intelligence of his ancestors nothing but a silly obstinacy and the ingenuity of a wizard maker of prophetic almanacks. The old order was passing, throughout Europe, and the new had scarcely taken fixed form or entity. Geographically Sweden had been dwindling throughout the eighteenth century, drying up, as it were, along the south shores of the Baltic: Courland was lost, Esthonia lost, even Pomerania was assailed. Finland, the most precious, the most extensive outland province, forming more than a fourth of the entire dominion, remained untouched, or almost untouched. There had not been wanting signs of Russian ambition working on the vast open frontier by Lake Ladoga. Already, before the century was half out, the great new power of eastern Europe had determined that its capital would never be secure until the Russian supremacy was acknowledged everywhere east of the Gulf of Bothnia. The Empress Elizabeth, while seizing the eastern counties of the province, had dangled before Finland the tempting hope of national independence under a protectorate of Russia. In 1788 the malcontent nobles, met at Anjala, offered to another great woman, to the Empress Catherine II., the dictatorship of Finland; but their treason infuriated the middle and lower classes, and when the Russian army commenced its invasion in 1789, it was met by a resistance as determined as it was unexpected. It was in this campaign that modern Finland first expressed itself; the war culminated in the battle of Porrasalm, a glorious victory for the Finns, in which Adlercrantz and Döbeln, afterwards so famous as generals, won their spurs. The peace of Wärälä, in 1790, left Finland full of the enthusiasm of military success, and loyal as a dependency of Sweden. But the murder of Gustavus III., at the Opera House of Stockholm, in 1792, brought the luckless Gustavus IV. to the throne, and reduced the nation to despair. One of the first events of the new reign was the loss of Pomerania. Finland now became the most precious, as it was the last, jewel in the Swedish crown; and to comfort his excellent Finnish

subjects, and to strengthen their hearts in the fear of *Punaparte*, as the Finns called Napoleon, the dreary monarch made a solemn tour through the province in 1802. Thus security reigned for a little while on both sides of the Gulf of Bothnia, Europe in the meantime writhing, convulsed by a conjunction of wars that threatened to conclude in chaos.

At this eventful moment there saw the light in a seaport of Finland the greatest poet that has ever used the Swedish tongue. Johan Ludvig Runeberg was born February 5th, 1804, at Jakobsstad, a little town halfway up the Gulf of Bothnia. He was the son of a merchant captain, and the eldest of six children. The straitened means of the parents induced them to accept the offer of the father's brother, a very well-to-do man in Uleåborg, who offered to adopt Johan Ludvig. Thither, therefore, far away north to the extreme town of the country, the child went. In Uleåborg he must have seen the birth-place of the greatest then-living poet of Finland, Franzèn, in whose steps he was afterwards to tread. We know little of his boyhood, except that at due age he was sent to the college at Wasa, and that he was so poor that he could only continue his studies there by serving as tutor to the younger and richer boys. But in the meantime changes of vast importance had occurred in the constitution of his country, changes to which he was destined in after life to give immortality by his art. In 1807, Napoleon had met Alexander I. at Tilsit, and had offered Finland to the Russian monarch in exchange for help against England. By one of those coincidences which give history the air of a well-planned sensation drama, the autocrat who now lies under a mass of Finnish porphyry in his Parisian tomb set out on the last great perilous enterprise which led him to his doom by the sacrifice of Finland to Russian ambition. In February 1808, three Russian armies broke into Finland. Like the troops who obeyed the summons from Anjala in 1788, these armies were grievously disappointed to find the fruit not ripe or ready to drop into their hand. Everywhere the Swedish sentiment was decided; the Finns rose in arms, 19,000 strong, and collected around the fortress of Tavasthus. But their resistance was, at first, not very successful. The south of the province was overpowered. Sveaborg, an impregnable maritime citadel, the Gibraltar of the north, built by Augustin Ehrensvärd, in 1749, on seven islets at the entrance of the harbour of Helsingfors, was shamefully and treasonably surrendered. In May the Russians marched into Helsingfors. Meanwhile the Finlanders had a different fortune in the north, where, under two noble generals, Adlercrantz and Döbeln, they rallied their forces to defend the sea-coast and the Bothnia districts. On April 18, across the frozen river Sükajoki, the Swedes and Finlanders won their first victory, and defeated the Russians again, nine days later, at Revolax. A little later, Döbeln contrived to drive the enemy back from the walls of Nykarleby, and to win a signal victory at Lappo. But on September 14, 1808, Adlercrantz lost all but honour at the terrible battle of Oravais, the most fiercely contested and the decisive engagement of the campaign. Finland

was lost, and by the Peace of Fredrikshamn, on September 17, 1809, it was finally annexed, as a grand duchy, to the dominions of Russia.

Such were the events which agitated the childhood of Runeberg. In after life he clearly remembered seeing Döbeln and Kulneff, the Swedish general with the black band round his forehead that concealed the wound in the left temple which he bore away after the battle of Porrasalmi, the Russian general with his bright eyes and long, brown beard. He saw them in the streets of Jakobsstad, when he was four years old, and this memory gave a particular colouring to his pictures of the war. Stories were repeated in his presence of the chivalric regard which each opponent had for the other, how Kulneff forbade his Cossacks to fire upon Döbeln, and how Döbeln's soldiers respected the person of Kulneff; and when he came to write *Fänrik Ståls Sägner*, there was to be found among the portraits of friends and patriots a noble tribute to the generous Russian leader also. It is noticeable that in the native literature of Finland, since the annexation, there is none of the tone of smothered insurrection which marks the atmosphere of Poland, or even the dull discontent of Esthonia and Courland. The Swedish Lutherans of Finland have been by far the best treated of all the dependants of the empire. No attempt has been made to force Russian upon them as their official language, no check has been put on the free development of the literature, even when, as in the case of Runeberg, that development has taken the form of deepening and extending the patriotic sentiment. The fact is, that under the easy Russian yoke Finland is more free than she was under the Wasas, and has actually attained that intellectual and spiritual independence which Porthan, her great citizen of the eighteenth century, dreamed for her—an independence which consists in liberty of thought, the spread of an education congenial to the nature of the people, and a free development of science and *belles lettres*.

In the autumn of 1822, Runeberg, then in his nineteenth year, left Wasa to enter a student life in the university of Åbo. He enjoyed few of the luxuries and the amenities which we identify with the existence of an undergraduate. Such a university life as is to be found in Aberdeen or St. Andrews presents a truer analogy with that in a Scandinavian town. Most of the students were poor, many of them extremely poor, and among these latter few had a harder struggle than Runeberg. In the spring of 1827 he successfully closed his examinations, and received the degree of doctor of philosophy. It was a little earlier than this that he made his first appearance before the literary public. One evening in 1826 a party of young people met at the house of Archbishop Tengström, the metropolitan of Finland; there was set on foot a game of forfeits, the last of which was lost by a student of the name of Runeberg. The young ladies put their heads together, and finally decided that, as he was suspected of writing verses, he should then and there compose a Hymn to the Sun. This he accomplished, nothing loth; and it was so highly approved of that Sjöström, then considered one of the chief Fin-

nish poets, printed it forthwith in a newspaper of which he was the editor. The young poet had hardly received his degree, when an event occurred which entirely revolutionised his career. On a mild September evening in 1827, as the good people of Åbo were going to bed, they were alarmed to hear the tocsin furiously sounded from the tower of their cathedral. A girl had spilled some tallow, the tallow had taken fire, and in half an hour the wood-built city was in a blaze. The fire spread with infinite velocity, engulfed the university first, and then the cathedral; before the morning broke not an eighth of the flourishing capital of Finland still existed. In the confusion that ensued, the university was transferred to Helsingfors, a larger town further east on the Gulf of Finland, and this place has since then been the seat of government. Runeberg was left to choose his career. He decided to leave the sea-coast, where he associated only with educated persons using the Swedish language, and to penetrate into the heart of the country, by so doing to gain a knowledge of his beautiful fatherland and its singular aborigines. He therefore accepted a tutorship in a family living at Saarijärvi, a sequestered village in the heart of the country, on the high road between the Gulf of Bothnia and the White Sea. Here he had plenty of leisure to study the primitive life of the country people, among the desolate and impressive scenery of the interior. Saarijärvi lies on the extreme arm of one of the great winding lakes, that seem to meander for ever between forest and moorland, thickly dotted with innumerable islands. Round it stretch in every direction the interminable beech-woods, muffling the air with such a silence that the woodman's axe falls with a mysterious, almost with a sinister sound. There are few spots in Europe so utterly remote and inaccessible; the solitude is broken only by the farmer's cart, the footstep of some wandering Finn or Quain, or the voice of a Russian pedlar from Archangel singing loud to keep himself company through the woods. Here it was that Runeberg buried himself for three years. He had a good many books, mainly the Greek poets; he studied hard, whether nature was his master or Homer, and he set himself studiously to unlearn whatever his teachers had taught him of the art of Swedish poetry. The ruling genius of Sweden at that date was Tegnèr, the famous poet of *Frithiofssaga*, in whom the peculiarly Swedish vice of style, which consists in cultivating empty and sonorous phrases, had reached its climax. Tegnèr was a poet of great genius, but he had not the intellectual courage or the inclination to cast behind him the poetic phraseology of his day. Instead of doing this, instead of adopting a realistic style, he simply gilded and polished the old "ideal" language, and the practical result of his brilliant productions was to paralyse poetry in Sweden for half a century. It was right that the voice which was to do away for ever with this glitter and fustian should come out of the wilderness. Not in Lund or Upsala, but in an unknown village in the heart of the forests of Finland, the seed was germinating which was destined to fill the whole country with a flower of

a new sort, a veritable wood-rose to take the place of the fabulous asphodel. In Tegnèr the old forces that battled in Swedish literature had found a common ground, and, as it were, an apotheosis. There were no longer academic writers who loved the old French rules. "Phosphorists" who outdid Tieck and Novalis in mysticism, Gothic poets who sought to reconcile the antique Scandinavian myths to elegant manners and modern thoughts, all these warring groups united in Tegnèr. Between Tegnèr and Runeberg the natural link is wanting. This link properly consists, it appears to me, in Longfellow, who is an anomaly in American literature, but who has the full character of a Swedish poet, and who, had he been born in Sweden, would have completed exactly enough the chain of style that ought to unite the idealism of Tegnèr to the realism of Runeberg. The poem of *Evangeline* has really no place in Anglo-Saxon poetry; in Swedish it would accurately express a stage in the progress of literature which is now unfilled. It is known that Mr. Longfellow has cultivated the language of Sweden with much assiduity, and has contemplated literary life in that country with all the unconscious affection of a changeling.

The years spent by Runeberg at Saarijärvi were occupied in almost continual literary production. He wrote here the most important and most original works of his early manhood. Among these must be mentioned *Svartsjukans nätter* (Nights of Jealousy), a large part of his *Lyrical Poems*, and his great epic or idyl of *Elgskyttarne*, or The Elk Hunters. Of these the lyrical poems have lately been translated in their entirety by Messrs. Magnusson and Palmer (C. Kegan Paul and Co.), in a version remarkable for care and scholarship. They were originally published, together with a collection of Servian Folksongs, in 1830, and formed Runeberg's first published volume. This publication followed close upon the young writer's reappearance in the civilised world; he left his hermitage in that year to accept the post of amanuensis to the council of the university, now settled in Helsingfors. The volume was dedicated to Franzèn, the poet-bishop of Hernösand, one of the most illustrious persons Finland had produced; a proem addressed to this eminent man breathes the same fresh and unconventional air that animates the body of the book itself, and also contains not a few traces of the study of the poet eulogised. In fact, the influence of Franzèn is strong throughout the early writings of Runeberg, a pure and genial, but not robust influence, which did the young poet no harm, and out of which he very speedily grew. Franzèn wrote to him a letter full of tenderness and prophecy. "I know," he had the generosity to write to this unknown beginner, "that it is a great poet that Finland is about to produce in you." The perfume of the violet and the song of the lark were strong in this book of thoroughly sincere and unaffected verses, and the public was not slow in acknowledging the Bishop of Hernösand to have been a true prophet.

In 1831 he attempted to win larger laurels than the coteries of Hel-

singfors could offer him. He sent in to the annual prize-giving of the Swedish Academy a poem of considerable length, *Grafven i Perrho* (The Grave in Perrho), a work which for the first time displayed to advantage his rich severity of style, his epic force and freshness. It was the story of a grave in the wilds of Finland, the grave of an old man and his six tall sons, and told with infinite beauty the tragic circumstances that laid them there. The Swedish Academy, unable to overlook so much originality, but unwilling to crown a realist who disregarded the conventionalities so rudely, rewarded the poet with the small gold medal, a distinction commonly given to very mediocre merit. Still this was a measure of national recognition; and, in the glee of success, Runeberg married one of the young ladies who had set him his first lesson in verse five years before, the daughter of Archbishop Tengström. This year, indeed, proved a turning-point in his life, for he received a post which bound him to the capital; in reward for a learned tractate comparing the *Medea* of Euripides with the *Medea* of Seneca, he was appointed Lecturer on Roman Literature at the University. From this time forward every step was an advance; he felt himself more and more sure of his genius, of his representative position in so small a state as Finland, where he began to take a place as literary oracle. He now undertook the labours of journalism, and founded a newspaper, the *Helsingfors Morgonblad*, which he edited with such success that it became the most influential journal in the grand duchy. Runeberg remained sole editor until 1837, and during these years he made it the medium of spreading far and wide the principles of culture and literary taste. All the best critical writings of the poet, all which is preserved in the sixth volume of his collected works, originally saw the light in the columns of the *Helsingfors Morgonblad*.

The greatest result of his solitude at Saarijärvi remained, however, still unknown till in 1832 he published his *Elgskyttarne*, or The Elk Hunters. This poem marks an epoch in Swedish literature. It is as remarkable, in its way, as the novels of Zola; it begins a new class of work, it is one of the masterpieces of scrupulous realism, a true product of the nineteenth century. The form is the same adopted by Voss, Goethe, Tegnèr, Kingsley, and many more North European poets for narrative work, the dactylic hexameter. But the Swedish language suits this exotic growth much better than German or English; there are more compact masses of rolling sound to be obtained, it is far more easy to observe the rules of position. Runeberg seems to have gone straight back to Homer for his model, and though there are moments when we feel that he could not entirely forget *Hermann und Dorothea*, his hexameters have as a rule a more pure and classical character than Goethe's. The plan of the poem is as follows:—The local magnate of an inland Finnish district, the Kommissaric or Agent, has ordered all the chief men of the place to meet at his house for an elk-hunt next morning. The worthy farmer, Petrus, at home in his large guest-room, prepares,

half overcome with sleep, for the duties of the morrow, furbishing up his gun, and listening to his wife Anna, as she busies herself in the house and gossips. The door opens, and Anna's brother, Mathias, a rich farmer from a distant parish, whose wife has died about a year before, appears on an improvised visit. He has scarcely sat down to supper, when Anna commences to mourn over the desolate condition of his children, and urges him to find a wife to take care of his fine home at Kuru. Petrus proposes the beauty of their parish, Hedda, the daughter of Zacharias, and the pair paint her virtues in such glowing terms that Mathias begins to wish to see her. It is agreed that he shall follow the hunt next morning, and be introduced to her incidentally at the meet. Next morning Petrus is waked by the noise of a quarrel between Pavo, one of his servants, and Aron, a beggar to whom, after the Finnish custom, he is exercising hospitality. He rises in the dark winter morning, and he and Mathias start for the rendezvous. It is a ringing frosty day, or rather night, for the stars are still brilliant overhead. Petrus supplies his brother-in-law with an old Swedish rifle, a jewel of a weapon, as he explains in an episode. It was with this rifle that Petrus's uncle, Joannes, picked out a spy at an incredible distance in 1808, and this leads to other tales of the great war with which they beguile the way to the Agent's. At last they reach the house, and receive a warm welcome; already the guest-room is full of people, and among the first they meet are Zacharias and his lovely daughter Hedda. There are, moreover, a group of Russian pedlars from Archangel, who recognise Mathias, and loudly praise the hospitality they lately enjoyed at his house in Kuru. One of the pedlars, the brown-bearded Ontrus, thinks this an excellent opportunity for hawking his wares, and we have an exquisite picture of the girls darting like swallows around his pack as he displays his treasures. But alas! they are poor, and there are no purchases. Mathias conceives that this is the moment for him to advance. He buys presents for them all, but the most costly and the most tempting for Hedda. Petrus cannot help paying the beautiful girl a compliment in these words:—

> As when a cloud in spring hangs bright o'er the trees on a hill-side,
> Hushed is the underwood all, and the birches stand mutely admiring,
> Watching the pride of the morning, the rose-hued breast of the cloudlet,
> Till from the heart of it issues a breeze, and the shoots on the branches
> Tenderly wave, and their leaves half unfolded shiver with pleasure,
> Not less quivers the youth when he gazes on Hedda and hears her.

Hedda finds herself in a shy confusion, and sends Mathias a grateful glance when he reproves his brother-in-law for this persiflage. The Agent now appears, dawn is breaking, and the hunters all go out into the snow, Mathias still dreaming of the beauty of Hedda. However, they call upon him for a story, and he rouses himself to describe, in the most powerful and brilliant language, the killing of a bear. They find the elk on a wooded island, and the hunt begins; but we are transported

back to the Agent's guest-room, where the Archangel traders have made themselves cosy with the girls, and where the youngest of them, the handsome Tobias, excited with beer and love, begins to dance about, and to offer the indignant Hedda all his wares in exchange for a kiss. His elder brother, Ontrus, turns him out of doors, where he screams and sings and jumps about till he drops down fast asleep. Ontrus gravely presses on Hedda the advantages she would find in marrying this his scapegrace brother, till she at last escapes from his importunity by joining the old women upstairs. Ontrus then has a violent quarrel with a spiteful ancient dame, the cripple Rebecca, and at last falls fast asleep upon the floor. This odd scene is described with great humour, and in minute detail, like a Teniers. Meanwhile the hunt proceeds; four elks are shot, of which Mathias bags two with the famous Swedish gun. On the way home he asks Zacharias for leave to court his daughter. No sooner has he entered the guest-room than he finds an opportunity of speaking to Hedda, and is on the point of tenderly pressing his suit, when the abominable old Rebecca puts in an oar and spoils it all. The girl flies to an upper room, but Mathias sends Petrus after her. A very quaint and charming scene ensues. Petrus sits down with his pipe opposite the conscious maiden, and recounts at great length the virtues and the possessions of this "brave Mathias from Kuru," how fine his farmstead is, how wide and fertile his fields are, taking care to explain that they consist of rich black top-soil on a clayey bottom. These poetic details move the maiden less than an eloquent recital of the vigour and excellence of the possessor, and Petrus begs her not to refuse because Mathias is no longer a romantic youth. He perorizes thus:—

> Never so rich is in blossoms a field in the heart of the summer,
> Child, as in pleasures the way to the grave if we walk with contentment,
> If we but step with a care to the road, nor let hope the enchantress
> Leap from the path at our feet, and persuade us another were fairer.
> Only the fool is beguiled, but he follows and wantonly wavers,
> Never at peace, till death suddenly falls on him, sighing, and takes him.

Hedda finds it difficult to reply, but at last she manages to murmur a pretty and modest assent. And she sits awhile, weeping for pleasure, and patting Petrus's hand, until he weeps too, to keep her company. Then Mathias comes, and all is happiness. We are now taken back to the homestead at Tjäderkulle, where Anna sits at home, while Aron the beggar plays national airs upon the jew's-harp, an instrument, perhaps, hitherto unknown to epic poetry. At Anna's desire he tells the terrible story of his life, how one bad season after another ruined him, till at last his wife died of starvation, and he himself nearly went mad. He has scarcely closed this tragical recital, when Petrus enters, and proposes they should all immediately proceed to the Agent's house to be present at the betrothal of Mathias; this they accordingly do, and the poem ends with a spirited and humorous picture of the scene at the ceremony.

The next few years of Runeberg's life were full of work and happi-

ness. In 1833 he published a second volume of lyrical poems, and improved his economical position by lecturing on Greek literature in the University. It was about the same time that he met the indefatigable collector of Finnish legends, the famous Dr. Elias Lonnröth, then still occupied in putting together the ancient epic of the *Kalevala*. In this new-found treasure-house of mythological wealth Runeberg took the keenest interest, and translated the beginning of it into Swedish. In 1836 Lonnröth made himself and Finland famous throughout Europe by his publication of the original text. It is perhaps fortunate that Runeberg did not carry out his original idea of translating the whole of the *Kalevala*, a work well performed by less representative hands than his. In 1834 he had attempted dramatic creation, in the form of a comedy in verse, *Friaren från Landet* (The Country Lover), which was acted and published with success, but which the poet would never allow to be reprinted among his works. In 1836 appeared a poem far more worthy of his genius, the delicate idyl of *Hanna*. This, also, is written in hexameters, and closes the first period of his poetic career. It was dedicated "To the First Love," and it forms, in fact, a kind of modern *Romeo and Juliet*. In a quiet Finland parsonage the pastor sits in his study, calmly smoking his pipe, and gazing over the hazy landscape. It is a warm summer afternoon, and he sits waiting for his son, who has just passed his examination at Åbo. The lad has been told that if he passes he may bring home with him some poor comrade to spend the vacation in the country; and he has passed, so a stranger is expected. In another room sits the pastor's lovely daughter, Hanna, weaving, but the perfume of the lilacs, blossoming at the open window, troubles her fancy, and she leans out into the warm air, her brain full of little graceful vanities, the pretty whims of a spoilt child. At this moment the old housekeeper, Susanna, enters, and tells her to dress as quickly as she can to receive the Bailiff, a man of fifty, rich and respected, who has just come to pay her father a visit. From some words the portly gentleman has let fall she fancies that his mission is to ask Hanna for his wife. The girl is much fluttered, but not displeased at this notion; to be the chief lady of the place is flattering to her vanity, and she does not comprehend what it is to be a wife. Her father comes to call her down, and though she clings to Susanna in her confusion, she is absolutely obliged to open the study-door at last.

> Blushing she stood at the door, in the exquisite charm of her shyness,
> Coy as a strip of the sea that is caught by the rush of the morning,
> Slender and quivering in rosy dismay through the gloom of the woodlands.

The Bailiff is hardly less confused than she; but her father, who greatly desires the match, expends much flowing speech, till the suitor succeeds in gaining confidence, and expatiates on the charms of his house and garden, the latter being so well-cultured and protected that sometimes, in very warm summers, they manage to ripen an apple. He

apologises much for his age, though this has not occurred to Hanna as an objection. They give her some days to make up her mind, and she flies to her own room. There a girl, half friend, half dependent, called Johanna, is taken into her confidence, and violently objects to the match, advising Hanna to wait for some young suitor. Hanna, a little shaken in resolution, is desiring more light on this difficult subject, when suddenly her brother and his friend arrive. The Bailiff has by this time gone, and the pastor is left free to welcome his son. The friend is discovered to be the son of a poet, whose bosom companion the pastor was at college, and who died early. He is a handsome, ardent, ingenuous youth, and the old man is delighted thus to renew the early alliance. Hanna enters, and there is mutual love at first sight. With him it is conscious, with her it is an unconscious trouble and dismay for which she cannot account. The pastor desires that they should embrace one another as if they were brother and sister, and Hanna kisses him lightly, like a summer wind, and disappears, to think it all over in her own room.

"So she thought to herself, and her thoughts were less words than a perfume." She smiles to think how fresh and radiant he is, and then she weeps, not, she says, for love, but in anger that he, a young poor student, should dare to look so charming and so confidential. They have the evening meal together, and then her brother insists that she and the friend should go with him for a long stroll together. They proceed down to the lake, and the brother expatiates on the scene, a truly inland landscape, unlike the coast of the Gulf of Finland at Åbo.

> "Look at the lake in the sunset," he answered, "look you, how unlike
> 'Tis to the sea as it moans round the rock-built shores of your childhood!
> Here there are verdure and colour and life; quaint numberless islands
> Shoot from the breast of the wave, and gracefully swaying on each one,
> Clumps of underwood offer the worn-out mariner shadow.
> Follow me down to the beach, calm strip between meadow and water,
> Here you may glance o'er a wider expanse, discerning the hamlet
> Dimly sequestered afar, and the steeple that shines in the distance."

They continue their walk in the soft and magical air of a northern sunset, while their voices grow intenser and graver. A talk about wild-birds reveals the tenderness of Hanna's nature, and she is led to tell, with exquisite pathos, the story of the death of an old fisherman whose hut they pass. At last the brother confesses that he is betrothed to the friend's sister. They all seat themselves in the purple twilight round a bubbling well, and subdued by the witchcraft of the sound of the water, the perfume of the earth and the colour of the heavens, the lovers, who only met a few hours before, obey a sovereign impulse and fall into each other's arms. The brother is delighted; all three proceed through the deepening dusk to ask the father's blessing, which he grants with some surprise, but with a very fairly good grace.

The great landmarks in a poet's life are events which would scarcely

be worthy of mention in the biography of a man of action. The solitude at Saarijärvi, the public career in Helsingfors, had each in succession moulded and ripened the powers of Runeberg's mind; a third step, the last in his life, was to develope those powers to their utmost, and to prepare him for their natural decay. In 1837 he accepted a professorate of Roman Literature at the College of Borgå, and removed thither with his family. This quiet little town remained his home for forty years, until his death. Borgå, which the long residence of Runeberg has rendered famous, lies some thirty miles east of Helsingfors, close to the sea, and on the high road into Russia. It has a cathedral and a bishop, and enjoys a certain sleepy distinction that prevents it from becoming too tamely provincial; but nothing can avail to make it other than a very hushed and dreamy little place. The poet became exceedingly attached to Borgå, and soon fell into that absolute, almost mechanical round of life which so often marks the later years of men of genius. In this quietude, which the college and the cathedral preserved from entire stagnation, he was able to write without distraction, and with the utmost regularity. He was now recognised as a leading poet throughout Scandinavia; in 1839 the Swedish Academy, of its own free will, voted him the large gold medal, the highest compliment in its gift, and had he been a citizen of Sweden he would without doubt have been forthwith elected into that stately body. Baron von Beskow, on behalf of the Academy, conveyed to the young Finnish poet a series of compliments that could not fail to gratify him. It was indeed a period of transition. The old writers were passing away; several eminent poets of the elder generation had just died, Wadman, Nicander, Wallin. Tegnèr was at the height of his glory; there was no young man so fit to be considered heir apparent of the skaldship as Runeberg. He was thus urged on to still higher attainment. His first work at Borgå was of doubtful success. *Julqvällen* or "Christmas Eve," is an idyl of the same class as *The Elk Hunters* and *Hanna*, but it possesses neither the force of the first nor the sweetness and colour of the second. It is not even a complete story; it is merely an episode, and an episode not specially suited to poetic treatment. At the same time it is worked out with even finer dramatic tact and insight. An old crippled soldier, Pistol, is stumbling from his hut in the woods, through the snow, to the house of the Major, who has invited him to come to spend the festive Christmas Eve with his servants. Much jollity, however, cannot be expected: every one has some near relative away in the Russian armies fighting the Turk, and who knows if he be alive or dead? Pistol thinks of his only son, the apple of his eye, of whom he has for a long while heard nothing. While he tramps on, he hears a carriage behind him, and the clear voice of the Major's younger daughter, Augusta, calling to him to get in and ride. She is the light of the whole parish, and a universal favourite. Her elder sister, whose husband is away in the war, and her mother, spend their days in weeping and sighing, and nearly drive the old Major out of his wits; Augusta

alone tries to keep something like cheerfulness up at home. When they arrive at the house, Pistol goes into the kitchen, Augusta into the guest-room, where she finds the usual scene of petulant recrimination going on. Even she is almost in despair. But by degrees she manages to bring peace into the house again, and the way in which the Christmas Eve is spent, above stairs and below, is described very brightly and humorously. In the midst of it all there is a great noise in the courtyard, lights are brought, and it is found that the Lieutenant, Augusta's brother-in-law, has come back safe and sound. There are universal rejoicings, until he comes to explain that poor Pistol's son has been killed by the enemy in a skirmish. This renews their regret, and Pistol is almost broken-hearted, thinking of the desolate life he must now live, alone in the woods. But the Major declares that he will not allow him to go back to that solitude; he must in future take up his abode as one of the retainers of the great house, and in the prospect of so much kindness he is a little consoled for his loss. In *Julqvällen* Runeberg returns to the rigidly realistic style of *Elgskyttarne*, which he had partly abandoned in *Hanna* in favour of a tenderer and more romantic feeling.

In the same year, 1841, he published a very different poem, and a more successful one. He had hitherto devoted himself entirely to the study of Finnish character and the scenery of Finland; in *Nadeschda* he has drawn from his experience of Russian character and manners, and has in fact written one of those Builínas or national Russian epics about which Mr. Ralston has told us much and promised us more in his charming *Songs of the Russian People*. This curious poem is closely allied to the lyrical stories that Ruibnikof collected on the shores of Lake Onega from the lips of the peasants; it is composed from the peasant's point of view, and shows a singular insight into Russian popular feeling. Until Mr. Ralston completes his study of the Builínas, it is not easy for a non-Russian student to understand what is exactly the form of these curious epics; but Runeberg has probably been correct in composing *Nadeschda* in a great variety of unrhymed, strongly accentuated measures. Nadeschda is a lovely Russian girl, a serf, and when the poem opens we find her wandering beside a tributary of the Moskwa, stirring the flowers with her fair feet, and dreaming of some vague lover, who will come to marry her. She bends over the water, and while she is admiring her own reflection, she remembers that this beauty is the beauty of a slave, and can be bought and sold. At this moment Miljutin, her foster-father, comes to summon her to the festival of welcoming Prince Woldmar, their master, back to the castle. Nadeschda will not come, full of this new revolt against the humiliation of her birth. At last Miljutin persuades her to come, and leaves her that she may adorn herself; but she refuses to bathe in the river, to girdle herself with flowers, or to put on her saint's-day garments. She weaves a belt of thistles and other dolorous herbs, and binding them round her common dress, she follows Miljutin. Meanwhile Prince

Woldmar is approaching in a golden chariot, accompanied by his brother Dmitri, who is burning with jealousy to see the noble estate which his brother has inherited. Just outside the gates they stop, at Dmitri's desire, and while the *cortége* waits, the brothers, with their falcons on their wrists, pass out into the woodland. They send their hawks after a dove, who flies in terror into Woldmar's bosom, and Woldmar's falcon kills Dmitri's. At this the evil brother's rage increases, and he demands a ransom. Woldmar promises him the fairest of his slaves, and at that moment they perceive Nadeschda passing through the forest towards the castle. They regain their carriage, but these incidents have sufficed to throw Woldmar into a rage, and as they drive up through the ranks of gaily-dressed retainers, his eye catches one girl who has only a coil of straw in her hair and thistles for a girdle. He stops and shouts to her to come to him; it is Nadeschda. He storms at her for her disrespect, and swears she shall instantly marry the basest of his grooms; but she, glancing timidly at him, perceives that he is the lover of her dream, and she flushes rosy red with shame and sorrow. He falls under the spell of her beauty and loves her, even before he has finished his reproof. Dmitri, also, perceives her loveliness, and claims her as the ransom for his falcon. But Woldmar gives Nadeschda her freedom, and then brusquely turning to Dmitri, says that he only promised to give him a slave, and that this is a free woman. Dmitri, excessively piqued, sends out the same night to secure her, but she has disappeared, and he cannot discover what has become of her. Two years are now supposed to pass and we are presented to Nadeschda, a lovely and accomplished woman, who has been protected and educated in hiding by some noble ladies, friends of Prince Woldmar. He comes to visit her, and we are given one of Runeberg's characteristic love-scenes, full of tenderness and highly-wrought passion. He explains to her that they have everything to fear from his mother's pride and his brother's jealousy. In the next canto, however, he has resolved to brave these dangers, and bringing Nadeschda to his castle, he is about to be privately married to her, when Prince Dmitri hears of it, and communicates with his mother, the Princess Natalia Feodorowna. The proud dowager determines that, sooner than her son shall marry a serf, she will herself denounce him to the Empress. We then have a very dramatic scene. Potemkin is presented lounging on a rich ottoman, and scolding General Lutusoff and other eminent soldiers for the laxity of their regiments: he has some insolent word for each, and finally bids them all to leave his presence, except Prince Woldmar. Potemkin charges him with his intended *mésalliance* as with a crime, tells him of the Empress's displeasure, sends him off forthwith to Tomsk, and gives his castle, with Nadeschda in it, into his mother's care. Nadeschda is turned out of doors, and returns to the hut of her foster-father Miljutin. Thither Dmitri follows her, expecting an easy conquest, but her dignity and her despair overcome him, and he consents to leave her unmolested. The Princess Natalia ruins the

district with her tyrannies, and the serfs are in the last condition of destitution, when suddenly the Empress announces that she is coming to the castle to spend the night. To hide the desolation of the scene, the Princess has some painted semblances of cottages set up along the opposite hill-side, and when the Empress arrives, she is so pleased at this appearance of comfort that she insists on going to visit the cottagers themselves. The Princess is accordingly disgraced, Nadeschda throws herself at the Empress' feet and is pardoned, and Prince Woldmar returns to celebrate his marriage.

The position of Runeberg at Borgå became more and more firmly settled. In 1842 he was offered and accepted the chair of Greek. A third volume of lyrical poems, in 1843, and the cycle of romances entitled *Kung Fjalar*, in 1844, testified to the freshness and ascending vigour of his imagination. *Kung Fjalar*, in fact, marks the very apex of his powers; Runeberg never exceeded this tragic work in the admirable later creations of his brain. It has an audacity, an originality that raise it to the first order of lyric writing. It is very difficult, by making a cold-blooded analysis of such a poem, to give the reader the least notion of its beauty. The plot is as follows. A mythical king of Gauthiod, Fjalar, has fought many battles and won as many victories; his hair is silver, and he now determines to live at home in peace, and keep watch over the prosperity of his people. It is Christmas time, and there are revellings in Fjalar's castle. As his warriors gather round him, he tells them that he desires rest; he swears that by his own help, resting on his own will alone, he will lead the land up into wealth and happiness. As he makes this oath, an unknown stranger strides up the hall; he uncovers his face, it is Dargar the seer, the all-wise prophet, who hates Fjalar. He prophesies woe to Gauthiod and its king; and, as a last sorrow, Fjalar is to see before he dies his only daughter locked in the burning embrace of his only son. At a curse so fearful, silence and consternation rule in the hall: no one dares to speak till Fjalar orders the nurse to bring Hjalmar and Gerda, his infant children. He takes one babe on each arm, not knowing which to sacrifice, till at last his warriors persuade him to leave the boy to reign after him. One of them, Sjolf, approaches, and lifting Gerda from the king's embrace, takes her out into the night, and flings her, "a laughing sacrifice," off the cliff into the roaring sea. Fjalar forbids her name to be mentioned again, and then walks out in silence. The next canto takes us twenty years onward. In the Ossianic kingdom of Morven, the three sons of the king are all in love with his foster-daughter Oihonna, a lovely being mysteriously saved from the waves. Each of the sons tries to win her heart by a song. This is Gall's, the eldest:—

> Come, Oihonna, follow my life!
> The hunter loves thee, rosy cloud!
> The tall prince of the mountains
> Prays thee to share his upland footways.

Hast thou seen from thy mountain rocks
The broad expanses smile in the morning?
Hast thou seen the wakening sunrise
Drink the dew of the trembling haze?

Remember the sound of the windy woodlands,
Leaves that stir in the wing of the wind,
Birds' riot, and the intoxicate
Brook that flies through the sounding boulders!

Dost thou know how beats the heart
When to the noise of the horn and hounds
Rustle the bushes, and lo! the stag
Checks his leap and is here before us?

Maiden, lov'st thou the sombre twilight
That melts to the shine of the dewy stars?
Come, from the summit of Mellmor
Let us watch how the night is born.

O how oft have I sat on the mountain
When in the west the sun has been closing
His glimmering gates, and the red glow
Slowly faded out of the sky.

I have drunk the cool of the spirit of even,
Seen the shadows walk over the valleys,
Let my thoughts go wander
Around the sea of nightly silence.

Lovely is night on the cloudy heights,
'Tis easy to breathe in the fragrant woods;
Ah! be my bride! I will open
A thousand pleasures around thy heart.

So sings Gall the hunter, but in vain; nor can Rurmar the bard, nor Clesamor the warrior soften her crystal heart. Next we have a scene in which Oihonna, "the huntress of the swan-white arm," is hunting the deer in the Valley of Lora, in company with her friend the singer Gylnandyne. She sings the saga which tells how Hjalmar desired his father, King Fjalar, to let him go a-viking, and how, when the king would not, Hjalmar got away by stealth and won glory at sea. At this moment Oihonna is summoned back to Morven. When she arrives there, the Scotch king tells her of the circumstances of her coming to that land: how a captain, sailing one Christmas night by King Fjalar's castle, found a girl-child in the sea, brought her to Morven, and dying, bequeathed her to the king. Hjalmar, the terrible vikingr, now appears and attacks Morven. He fights with each of the sons of King Morannel in turn, and kills them; the youngest, Clesamor, fights so well that Morven trembles to hear a late half-dying echo from Ossian's heroic days, but falls at last. Morannel dies of grief in the arms of Oihonna. We then return to Gauthiod, where, from the heights above his castle, Fjalar, now extremely old, gazes in content and self-gratulation over the land that has prospered under his firm will and peaceful rule. He

thinks of the old curse only to deride it, when suddenly the evil seer, Dargar, arrives, and denounces the king. The hour of the vengeance of the gods is, he says, at hand; and he points to a golden speck on the horizon, the dragon of Hjalmar returning across the sea. They watch the approaching fleet; the prows grate the shore, and Hjalmar slowly ascends the mountain with a bloody sword in his hand. He explains that from the court of Morven he bore off Oihonna, a lovely and a loving bride; that on their homeward voyage she told the story of her birth, and that he perceived her too late to be his sister. With the sword he holds he slew her, and now he slays himself before his father's throne. The sun goes down, and when they turn to King Fjalar he is dead. Even from so slight an outline as this it may be seen how lofty a rendering this is of the old theme that wise men are powerless fighting against the gods. Fjalar is great, virtuous, and humane, but because he does not make the gods witnesses to his oath, he brings down upon himself and his race their slow but implacable vengeance. The style in which this poem is composed is exceedingly cold and severe, with delicate lyrical passages introduced without any detriment to the general solemnity. The work is like a noble frieze in marble, where among the sublime figures of the gods and their victims, the sculptor has sought to introduce an element of tenderer beauty in the flying graces of a garment or the innocent sweetness of a child's averted head.

We have now arrived at the work which did most to give Runeberg a name throughout all classes and in all the provinces of the North. It was in 1848 that he published the first series of *Fänrik Ståls Sägner* (Ensign Stål's Stories), a series of narrative poems dealing with the war of independence in 1808. The cycle professes to be said and sung by an old ensign, a veteran from the days of Döbeln and Adlercrantz, who recites to a young student all he can remember about the war. Similar stories Runeberg himself had heard, as a boy of sixteen, from an old corporal at Ruovesi. He himself, as we have said, dimly remembered seeing the Swedish and Russian armies pass through his birthplace, Jakobsstad. The publication of these national poems, breathing the full perfume of patriotic regret, the mingled tone of war-song and of elegy, created such a sensation as is but poorly comparable with the success of Mr. Tennyson's *Charge of the Light Brigade*. The volume was such a one as Mr. Dobell's *England in Time of War* might have proved in the hands of a far saner and more judicious poet. The first series appeared in 1848, the second in 1860; and with one poem on the treacherous surrender of Sveaborg, which was suppressed at the supplication of the descendants of the traitor, there are thirty-five pieces in all. They are varied in subject and style; they describe everyone from the king and the generals down to village maidens and "drunken privates of the Buff." *Fänrik Ståls Sägner* opens with the famous hymn which has become the national anthem of Finland, "Vårt land, vårt land." This is one of the noblest strains of patriotic verse ever indited; it lifts Runeberg at

once to the level of Callicles or Campbell, to the first rank of poets in whom art and ardour, national sentiment and power of utterance, are equally blended. Unhappily, in its crystal simplicity and its somewhat elaborate verse form, it is practically untranslatable. To enjoy it is one of the first and best rewards of him who takes the trouble to learn Swedish. The old Ensign is next described, and the events that led to his repeating these tales of his; and then the tales themselves begin. Some of the figures that stand out against the background of the war are of a marvellous freshness and realistic force. The stupid Sven Dufva, who had an honest heart; Lieutenant Zidén, who cheered on his little troop from Wasa; Wilhelm von Schwerin, the boy-hero; Otto von Fieandt, who uses his whip instead of a sword; General Adlercrantz fighting at Sükajoki. All are good; it may almost be said that not one is poor or weak. Perhaps the most exquisite, the most inimitable of all is *Soldatgossen*, the boy whose father—a brave young soldier—fell at the battle of Lappo, and who is only longing till he is fifteen years old to take up his rifle and go to fight the Russians. The absolute perfection of this poem, which it would be ruinous to fail to give, is too terrifying for a translator to attempt. Such a poem is like the strange draughts that Persian monarchs boasted; it takes its colour wholly from the vase that holds it, and would seem mere trash poured into a less cunning goblet. As a ballad less fine, and in a form less exacting, I venture to attempt a version of *Torpflickan*:—

THE VILLAGE GIRL.

The sun went down and evening came, the quiet summer even,
A mass of glowing purple lay between the farms and heaven;
A weary troop of men went by, their day's hard labour done,
Tired and contented, towards their homes they wended one by one.

Their work was done, their harvest reaped, a goodly harvest truly,
A well-appointed band of foes all slain or captured newly;
At dawn against this armed band they had gone forth to fight,
And all had closed in victory before the fall of night.

Close by the field where all day long the hard hot strife was raging,
A cottage by the wayside stood, half-desolate and ageing,
And on its worn low steps there sat a silent girl, and mused
And watched the troop come slowly by, in weary line confused.

She looked like one who sought a friend, she scanned each man's face nearly,
High burned the colour in her cheek, too high for sunset merely;
She sat so quiet, looked so warm, so flushed with secret heat,
It seemed she listened as she gazed, and felt her own heart beat.

But as she saw the troop march by, and darkness round them stealing,
To every file, to every man, her anxious eye appealing,
Seemed muttering in a shy distress a question without speech,
More silent than a sigh itself, too anguished to beseech.

But when the men had all gone past, and not a word was spoken,
The poor girl's courage failed at last, and all her strength was broken.
She wept not loud, but on her hand her weary forehead fell,
And large tears followed one by one as from a burning well.

"Why dost thou weep? For hope may break, just where the gloom is deepest!
O daughter, hear thy mother's voice, a needless tear thou weepest;
He whom thy eyes were seeking for, whose face thou couldst not see,
He is not dead, he thought of love, and still he lives for thee.

He thought of love; I counselled him to shield himself from danger,
I taught him how to slip the fight, and leave them like a stranger;
By force they made him march with them, but weep not, rave not thus,
I know he will not choose to die from happy life and us."

Shivering the maiden rose like one whom awful dreams awaken,
As if some grim foreboding all her soul in her had shaken;
She lingered not, she sought the place where late had raged the fight,
And stole away and swiftly fled and vanished out of sight.

An hour went by, another hour, the night had closed around her;
The moonshot clouds were silver-white, but darkness hung below them.
"She lingers long; O daughter, come, thy toil is all in vain,
To-morrow, ere the dawn is red, thy bridegroom's here again!"

The daughter came; with silent steps she came to meet her mother,
The pallid eyelids strained no more with tears she fain would smother;
But colder than the wind at night the hand that mother pressed,
And whiter than a winter cloud the maiden's cheek and breast.

"Make me a grave, O mother dear; my days on earth are over!
The only man that fled to-day, that coward was my lover;
He thought of me and of himself, the battle-field he scanned,
And then betrayed his brothers' hope and shamed his fathers' land.

When past our door the troop marched by, and I their ranks had numbered,
I wept to think that like a man among the dead he slumbered,
I sorrowed, but my grief was mild, it had no bitter weight,
I would have lived a thousand years to mourn his noble fate.

O mother, I have looked for him where'er the dead are lying,
But none of all the stricken bear his features, calm in dying;
Now will I live no more on earth in shame to sit and sigh,
He lies not there among the dead, and therefore I will die."

There can be little doubt that in *Fänrik Ståls Sägner* Finland has presented Swedish literature with the most intimate, glowing, and original poetical work that it possesses. And it is very interesting to note how much of what is most notable in the history of Sweden has proceeded from this desolate and distant province, now hopelessly separated from the realm itself. In the annals of statecraft, of the church, of war, and of the navy, the names of Finns are singularly prominent. In literature, some of the leading writers in each century—Frese in the seventeenth, Creutz in the eighteenth, Franzén, Fredrika Bremer, and Zakris

Topelius in the nineteenth—have been natives of Finland; but of all these Runeberg is the greatest. On May 13, 1848, the *Vårt Land*, to which music had been set by the greatest of Finnish composers, Pacius, was sung outside the city of Helsingfors, and the ringing tones of the new National Anthem were taken up by thousands of voices. This was the crowning day in the life of Runeberg.

By this time he had outlived the economical pressure of his earlier years. In 1844 he had been made titular Professor, and decorated with the order of the North Star by the King of Sweden, himself an accomplished poet. In 1847 he was unanimously elected Rector of the College of Borgå. In 1851 he achieved the only foreign journey he ever took, namely, a trip into Sweden, the great aim of which was a visit to the novelist Almqvist. He entered Stockholm just in time to hear that this illustrious person, perhaps the first intellect which Sweden then possessed, had just taken flight for America under a charge of forgery and suspicion of murder. This startling catastrophe caused Runeberg a lively disappointment, which the Swedish Academy and its spokesman, Count Beskow, did their best to remove by the cordiality of their welcome. Both in the capital and in Upsala he enjoyed the honours of a notable lion. At Upsala, however, he was thrown into the deepest melancholy by the constant necessity of answering the speeches made him on public occasions, for he was a very shy and poor speaker. He soon returned to Borgå, never to leave it again, hugging himself with the delight in home which so often marks a man of his type of genius. He was now possessed of a handsome house, which it was his delight to fill with objects of art, for he posed as the first connoisseur in Finland. When he had originally settled in Borgå he had rented a very small and humble house in the outskirts of the town; and towards the end of his life he was fond of repeating a story which showed that this prophet at least was not without honour in his own country. For, walking in the lonely streets one moonlight night, he was struck with a desire to go and look at this little lodging where he had spent so many of his struggling days. He found it; there was a light in the window, and, peeping through the shutters, he saw an artisan busy over his work, and singing. He listened attentively; it was one of Runeberg's own songs, and the poet turned away with tears of pleasure in his eyes. From this time forward his life was extremely uneventful. In 1853 he collected his prose writings, and published them under the title of *Smärre Berättelser*. In 1857, as president of the committee to select a National Psalter, he published a *Psalm-book for the use of Evangelico-Lutheran Congregations in Finland*, to which he contributed sixty-two psalms of his own composition. A second series of *Ensign Stål's Tales* appeared in 1860, and he closed his long literary career with the production of two dramatic works, *Kan ej* (Can't), a comedy in rhyme, performed and published in 1862; and *Kungarne på Salamis* (The Kings at Salamis), a tragedy in the manner of Sophocles. This last is one of his noblest

works, combining the Attic severity with the modern poet's realism and truth of detail. It resembles our own English dramas of *Atalanta in Calydon* and *Philoctetes* more closely than what the continental poets usually give us as revivals of the antique tragedy. The metre in which it is written is closely modelled on what the Swedish poet has conceived to be the tragic measure of the Greeks, a sort of solemn alexandrine.

When, in 1873, Professor Nyblom, in editing the works of Runeberg, issued a biographical notice which still remains the chief storehouse of information, the poet was already in very weak and precarious health. As late, however, as April 1877, he was well enough to publicly congratulate his old friend and fellow-poet Cygnæus on attaining his seventieth birthday. But he was taken ill very shortly after, and on the afternoon of Sunday, May 6, 1877, he passed away in his seventy-fourth year. He has left many disciples behind him, and in his friend and follower Topelius Sweden once more borrows from Finland her most prominent living poet. The influence of Runeberg on the literature of his time has been healthy and vigorous. In Talis Qualis, who survived him only a few weeks, he found in Sweden itself a quick and strong imagination lighted at the lamp of his own. The present King of Sweden, Oscar II., in his excellent poem of *Svenska flottans minnen*, has shown himself a scholar of the great Finnish realist. In Carl Snoilsky, the latest product of Swedish poetry, we find another side of Runeberg's genius, the artistic and classic, laid under the contribution of discipleship. We know as yet little of his life, little of the inward development of his great powers. A collection of his posthumous writings, as well as an exhaustive biography, will be welcomed by every lover of his noble verse.

E. W. G.

Cobin's Revenge.

CHAPTER I.

Making Hay in the Sunshine.

I was at the top of my *cour*—a grassy slope, thickly set with apple-trees—we should call it an orchard in England, where a "court" seems to suggest pavement, which it is far from doing in Normandy. Not but what there are plenty of stones in my cour, and Gracie, my precious, only daughter, sits in the sunshine making Druidic circles with them—Gracie, who is a vision of delight, the small tyrant of our fields and home. Mirza, the big dog, is watching her with a grave and puzzled mien, some occult resemblance in the flint stones to well-polished bones seeming to enchain his interest. There is another circle-maker close by—the cow—tethered by a chain passed round her horns to an iron pin, driven firmly into the soil. To give the cow a new centre of operations is my present object—but where to put her? She has eaten up all my grass, and is now looking wistfully at the green veil tied round Gracie's hat, as if she would like to eat that too.

The weather is fine—too fine for those who keep cows. We have had a broiling day, but the heat of it is past, and cool shadows begin to rest in the valley below, where you can see the chimneys of my house—where I live with Hetty my wife and Gracie my daughter, in peace and tranquillity. There, too, you can see the quaint, squat spire of the church, and its triple roof, slanting at various angles, and in a broad patch of sunshine the gaunt Gothic arches of a ruined abbey church, with the white florid conventual buildings beyond, suggesting at once the pallid, rigid cenobites who were the first settlers in this quiet valley, and the stout, easy-going Benedictines, the last occupants of the old nests, "where now the screech-owl builds his baleful bower." All about is forest, where the wild boar grows fat and fierce over the beech-mast, and the deer flit softly by, much as they did in the days of that Norman William who loved them so well. It is a charming prospect, but I wish it were all shut out by a good thick mist and a heavy downpour of rain. For then the grass would grow, and the cow would thrive, and my wife would cease to sneer at it. For I must say that Hetty is not so devoted to the cow as she ought to be. She counts its cost in a niggardly kind of way—scores against me the wages of the dairymaid and the cowboy, and even the cost of the trifle they eat—which is manifestly unfair, as everybody knows that one or two more or less in a household make no appreciable difference, and makes out that our butter costs us ten francs a pound.

My speculations are suddenly cut short by a low growl from Mirza, the object of which, I see next moment, is a man leaning over the gate—the one that leads forestwards—a sallow, heavy-browed man, in the universal blue blouse and a closely fitting fur cap, this last quite out of keeping with the climate. He touches his cap politely.

"Monsieur has a nice cow; but she looks thin. And the grass of the *cour*—it is worth nothing."

"The grass is not bad," I remark, "if there were only more of it."

"Ah! Monsieur should see the grass in my *cour*, thick and luscious, and I have no cow to eat it. Will Monsieur sell the cow?"

No, I would not sell the cow. It had cost me too much to acquire a real practicable working cow, whose milk foams in the pail, milk that will develope into cream and butter. I would not part with the cow, but would my new friend sell his grass?

"Oh!" cried Gracie, running up at this moment, "it is my little père Covin. Bo'jour, petit père, and have you made the little boat you promised me?"

"Not yet," said Covin, stooping down to kiss the proffered face. "I have not yet found a piece of wood suitable."

"But there is wood everywhere."

There was nothing astonishing in Gracie's being on friendly terms with a man who was quite a stranger to me. In her daily walks she formed continually new friendships—the whole village knew her and admired her, her fearless ways and readiness of speech. M. Covin, having paid his respects to Gracie, goes on to say that he might possibly arrange to let me his *cour*, and we walk together amicably to look at it, Gracie trotting by my side, chattering away in her mixture of French and English child talk. Covin, in spite of his heavy and forbidding look, is kind and obliging. He certainly has got a nice piece of grass, with not so many flint stones cropping up. We strike a bargain at once, without troubling the notary to put it into writing—a lease of his *cour* for an indefinite period, at a rent of fifty francs a year, payable quarterly in advance.

That "in advance" seemed mistrustful and unfriendly; but Covin was no doubt poor, and the money in pocket was his main inducement to let the *cour*. We went down together to ratify the compact in the village *café*.

As we came out, I saw the professor coming along, and paused to wait for him.

The professor and his wife reside in the neighbouring town, our only compatriots within a circle of many miles. We always call him the professor, although I don't know that he professes anything, but he reads, philosophises, lays down the law, and is insatiable in his thirst for information. He is a stout, jovial-looking man, and a great friend of mine.

"That's an Irishman," said the professor, wheeling round, and pointing out Covin, who was making his way up the hill. "In spite of his

blue blouse and his Norman *patois*, he is Irish. Look at the high curved cheek bone, the projecting muzzle, the sunken eyes, the shapeless nose. That man's grandfather was a Peep-o'day Boy, a United Irishman, or what not. He made his country too hot to hold him about the times of gallant Hoche, the Bantry Bay *fiasco*, and so on. His name is Covin, eh! I'll be bound it was Coghlan then. *Mutat cœlum non animum*—he is Irish still. An honest, hard-working fellow, I dare say—only not to be desired as landlord or tenant. But especially as tenant. Just the man to live rent free in your house, and shoot you if you try to turn him out."

The professor's words gave me a certain amount of uneasiness, for there seemed to be something possibly prophetic about them, but how could we possibly come to a disagreement about half an acre of grass?

Still the character I heard of Covin hardly tended to reassure me. He was a fisherman, it seemed, having a boat on the river, and often sleeping on board it. No one in the village liked him; he was "sauvage," morose, and uncommunicative, living an utterly lonely life. The only person who had a good word for him was the *curé*. "Covin," he said, "is industrious, and attentive to his religious duties. I have known him spend hours in the church, praying, his face working with strong emotion, his eyes fixed upon the sacred images." "He had no friends but God and his saints," he had once told the priest.

But the *curé* added gravely that although estimable in some points, he feared the man was passionate and revengeful. His unbridled temper had already brought him into trouble; about which the *curé* declined to say any more.

I found out what the trouble had been from another quarter. He had attempted to assassinate his "proprietor" (his landlord), and had only lately finished a term of imprisonment for the offence. I comforted myself by the thought, that even the most rabid of Ribbonmen would not assassinate a tenant who paid his rent regularly, and I determined that Covin should get his quarterly payment with most scrupulous punctuality.

Soon after this I exchanged my cow for a pony, an operation which called forth many jeers from the professor. He likened me to Hans in the German story, who changed his cow for a horse, his horse for a pig, and so on till he got to a grindstone, that tumbled into the river; but here Gracie, who has got her *Grimm* at her finger's end, triumphantly refuted him. It was the horse that Hans changed for a cow—and so the whole structure fell to the ground. Her parents were naturally delighted at Gracie's cleverness in refuting so opportunely the professor. But we were not so well pleased when Gracie, boasting of knowing all the stories, went on to say she had told them all to père Covin.

"What! is that the man the professor thinks so dangerous?" cried Hetty, turning pale.

"Not dangerous to his friends, and, for the matter of that, to be

trusted with a child or a woman under any circumstances—one would think. Not that there have been wanting very ugly examples to the contrary—when the quarrel has been agrarian," said the professor, who has a tendency to talk like a book on occasions. Hetty could not draw such fine distinctions, and questioned whether we should not interdict Gracie altogether from talking to Covin. But that would be interpreted by him into a sign of hostility, and I was anxious to avoid the slightest occasion of dispute. And the man was very kind to Gracie: he had carved with his knife a little boat for her, with mast and sail complete, that would always swim bottom upwards.

Of course, having a pony and no cow, I no longer wanted grass, but hay. And so next spring I put down both *cours* for hay. It was a fine year for herbage that, and as summer came on the grass in Covin's *cour* grew longer and longer, thicker and thicker. I was delighted at the prospect of such a crop, and one evening took Hetty and Gracie up to look at it. Covin had a capital garden about his cottage and had hitherto kept it in good order, working at it in the summer evenings, the smoke of his pipe rising peacefully into the blue. But now it had a neglected, deserted look. A few weeks' neglect at this time of year and everything runs riot. Perhaps Covin was away for the summer fishing. No—he stood at the door of his cottage, gazing blankly out upon the *cour*. He must have come home recently, and beheld perhaps for the first time the progress of my crop. Perhaps he was vexed that he had let me have it so cheap, for there was at least a hundred francs' worth of hay there. Anyhow, he looked as black as night, taking no notice of our courteous salutations. But Gracie went up to him headlong and clasped his knees with her little arms, in the exuberance of her delight at seeing her Covin again. She had a long story to tell him about the boat, which had run away down the stream. He was to make haste and carve another, that would swim the right way up. His face softened by degrees, but he hardly seemed to understand what she said. Then he stooped down and gave her a hasty kiss, put her gently away, went in and slammed the door.

One evening, soon after, I wanted some fresh grass for the pony, and took my scythe and went up to Covin's *cour* to cut a swathe of the rich, sweet herbage. The clank of the scythe brought Covin out of his cottage, and he watched me for a few moments with louring brow.

"It is forbidden to cut this grass," he said just as I had finished.

"How!" I cried, "I may not cut my own grass? Do I owe you any rent, Monsieur Covin?"

"I did not let it for such a purpose. I forbid you to cut any more."

"I don't want any more at present, but in a fortnight's time I begin to cut the hay."

"I forbid you!" he cried, in a voice husky with passion.

"All the same, I shall begin."

"And I shall prevent you."

"Good; we shall see!"

He followed me to the gate, muttering and talking to himself. I went home with the unpleasant feeling that it was my destiny to have a desperate feud with M. Covin. All the same, I would not give way. The hay should be cut, if I had to cut it myself.

This turned out to be the alternative. No one would come to cut Covin's *cour*, not for any inducement I could offer. The fortnight within which the haymaking should commence had expired. The hay would spoil if I waited any longer. I could handle the scythe pretty well; to-morrow I would begin. Covin had not been seen, it appeared, during the past fortnight. Some people thought he had set out for the deep-sea fishery. The keeper of the café, on the other hand, who knew his habits, thought that he was at home, brooding. He was keeping house, and brooding over his wrongs. He would seclude himself at times by the week together.

"And then he gets over his wrongs, and comes out."

"But, possibly—the last time he took to seclusion he came out and assassinated his 'proprietor.'"

It was clear that Covin was a prickly customer all round. But I felt a point of honour involved in making hay in his *cour*.

It was "in the prime of summer-time," a sweet, fresh morning, when I rose and shouldered my scythe to begin on Covin's *cour*. I kissed my sleeping wife with a kind of feeling that I was bound on a dangerous errand. I was not obliged to go, there was nothing to compel me, and a good deal to dissuade me. But I felt as if I must. I could not respect myself any longer if I gave in to Covin.

When I reached the point where I usually entered Covin's *cour*, the entrance from the lane, I rubbed my eyes, and thought I had mistaken my way. There was no sign of the gate, that was clean gone, and the hedge made up right along—a hedge of wattles and briers, supported by stout stakes—as spiky and thorny a stop-gap as ever I saw. But I happened to have a pair of English hedging gloves in my pocket, and a Sheffield blade, and went through Covin's hedge as if it had been paper. Then I took my stand under a tree, and began to sharpen my scythe. I half hoped that this barring me out was Covin's last protest, that he was now away, and would leave me in peace; but, at the sound of the whetstone and scythe, Covin appeared on the scene, his face white and wrathful. We capped each other politely, however, and then I set to work. Covin stood close beside me, and began an harangue. Slowly and calmly at first, but faster and more passionately every moment, as he worked himself more and more into a rage. At last, with a kind of fierce war-whoop, he bounded forward and placed himself in front of me."

"Not another stroke—not another blade of grass!"

The contrast between the heavy, dejected mien of his ordinary life and the fighting fury that now blazed forth in his face, startled me, and showed me the serious nature of the quarrel. Had I been prudent I should have shouldered my scythe and walked away. But primitive

instincts of combat were roused within me. It seemed to me impossible to give way. Gendarmes, prisons, galleys, even guillotines danced redly before my eyes; but, once for all, I did not care. I was not going to cave in to a fellow like that.

"I don't want to quarrel with you," I said, slowly, and feeling white all over; "but I mean to cut this grass. Stand away," and I raised the scythe for a sweep.

Covin leaped forward and planted himself in the way of the scythe. I turned aside, and began my stroke at another place. With a wild bound he leaped in front of me, the scythe gave a sickening jar——

CHAPTER II.

A Daniel come to Judgment.

Quite faint and queer, I leant upon my scythe, looking at Covin, who, with eyes blazing forth from a face of deadly pallor, swayed to and fro, as if about to fall. I sprang forward to help him, but he thrust me away with an indignant gesture. I had wounded him, but I could not tell where. I might have severed an artery, his death might be upon my head. Covin sank upon one knee and drew off his shoe: the scythe had cut through the leather, it was full of blood. There was an ugly wound on his foot, which he began to stanch with wisps of grass that he snatched from about him. The sight of his own blood seemed to increase his fury, and supply him with an access of strength: he bounded to his feet and dashed at me.

The sweet, lovely morning, calm, still, and tranquil, but for the gentle tinkling of the church bells, the sun gleaming among the apple-trees loaded with rosy fruit: I seemed to take the whole scene at a glance, with a sense of the hideous jar and discord of this homicidal contest—for such it was fast becoming. Covin, with his face close to mine, pouring forth burning words, was feeling for something at his side, his knife, no doubt, which he habitually wore, sailor fashion, ganging from his waist. A glance, however, showed me that the knife was not there. Covin, too, had arrived at the same conclusion. The knife had been there a few minutes before—it must have fallen on the grass. We were both searching the ground with our eyes, and I felt sure that if Covin could get hold of it before me that I stood a good chance of a deadly wound. We held each other by a hand, ready to wrestle for possession of the weapon.

"Bo' jour, père Covin! Now you will make me again a little boat. See, père Covin, here is your knife; you have dropped it."

It was Gracie, who had picked the knife from the grass and placed it in Covin's disengaged hand; Gracie, who had come up behind us unseen.

Covin snatched the knife from her; I saw it gleam in the air. Then he threw it far from him into the hedge.

"This time I spare thee, for the child's sake; but I have not done with thee, miserable coward! savage! assassin!"

And he limped off to his cottage, turning back every now and then to repeat the triplet of epithets.

"Hallo! what the dickens is the matter?" It was the professor, who, it seems, had accompanied Gracie up the *cour*, and who, not so nimble as the child, had been distanced in the ascent.

"Ah! it is the fisherman," he went on, catching sight of the retreating form of Covin; "that accounts for the Billingsgate. But what a sweet temper you have, my friend, to put up with his insolence!"

"He has some cause to abuse me; I have cut open his foot with my scythe."

"In a fracas?"

"Something of the kind."

"By Jove!" cried the professor, "what an awkward thing, and in this country, where personal violence is punished without respect of persons. I'll show you the section in the Penal Code."

The professor always carried a pocket edition of the Code with him. He turned with cruel alacrity to the very passage.

"Here it is, 'Titre 2, section 2.—Wilful wounds and blows not ranking as murder.' Not *so* far? Lock-jaw might supervene, and then it would. But in the most favourable event, your friend has only to take to his bed and declare himself incapable of working, and then, if his incapacity lasts for twenty days, you may count upon two to five years. The loss of the use of a limb involves penal servitude. A nice morning's work! Upon my word, Barton, if I were you, I would have my portmanteau ready packed."

"I had no intention to hurt him."

"That will be judged by the attending circumstances. If there has been a quarrel, high words, you will find that justice will hardly take the most lenient view. But even involuntarily wounding is punished with imprisonment."

The professor had come over to volunteer a day's help in the hay-making, but I had no longer any heart to work. That I should be haled off to prison before many hours were over seemed almost certain. Every footstep that approached I fancied must be the officers of the law come to arrest me. I was tormented, too, with fear lest I should have done some serious injury to Covin. I felt the hand of Cain upon me. Hetty was in tears, full of the wildest apprehensions. Gracie watched us gravely, not knowing what to make of it all.

Anything was better than this state of suspense. I drove into town, and went to the office of the principal *huissier*, an official who combines the functions of usher and bailiff of the local court, collects debts and bills, and recovers them if necessary by legal process, is the auctioneer, valuer, and factotum in all affairs of judgment or execution. It was better to take th bull by the horns, and get the first word in the ear of

justice. Besides, the *huissier* and I were already in friendly relations, as I had bought furniture at his sales and had done other business with him.

The *huissier* listened with a grave face to my story. He had nothing to do with criminal cases himself, they rested with the police; but clearly I was in a mess. I urged the provocation I had received, hindered from cutting the grass in the *cour* I had paid for.

"As far as that went," remarked the *huissier*, "the man was probably right. The *cour* attached to a house was generally reserved for pasture only; the man was only defending the rights of his *propriétaire*."

"A likely thing when he has just come out of prison for wounding him."

"Ah! is that so?" said the *huissier*, brightening up. "In that case, accompany me, if you please, to the *greffier*, and we will arrange the affair."

It now appeared that Covin, luckily for me, was on the official black books. Only lately out of prison and reputed a dangerous character, it was hardly likely he would venture to the *gendarmerie*, or be listened to if he went there. A man with an evil reputation who might be expected some day to commit a desperate crime.

In one respect this was reassuring, in another calculated to inspire graver apprehensions. Suppose that I myself should furnish the object of the serious crime in which the man's career was to culminate. I would rather have gone to prison for wounding him than that he should be brought to justice for killing me. And he had threatened me with that or worse.

"Bring a process against him, then," suggested the *huissier*.

"Yes, bring a process!" echoed the *greffier*, a stout, jovial-looking man. The preliminary process, it seems, is not expensive. Ninepence, a sum which in England is the subject of many mysterious attributes, in France is the price of an invitation, such is the polite phraseology, to your enemy to meet you in the "gate and siege of justice." This is termed a "conciliation." I trusted that Covin would consider it conciliatory, but I feared otherwise.

From that time to the hearing of the case the days passed in an atmosphere of dread. At night the shutters were all carefully fastened, a precaution we had never taken before. If I sat down in the day-time, Hetty always placed herself between me and the window. Once the casement clashed to with a loud bang, and Hetty screamed in terror. My own pallid face bore witness to my secret dread. The professor came to see us from time to time, and kept up my spirits with stories drawn from the repertory of his retentive memory, of blood-revenge among various races of men. He quite gloated over the affair as "an instance of the survival of primitive impulses" in a state of society where they were no longer serviceable. These primitive battles for wells and pastures cropping up in the middle of this highly artificial civilisation of

ours! Natural consequence that civilisation gets the best of it, and brings primitive impulses to a bad end.

Another circumstance made me uneasy. Nothing had been seen of Covin since the day of our skirmish. Rumours run like wildfire through the village. He was dying of his wounds. He had been seen sitting in his garden cleaning an old gun. Gracie was always wondering what had become of her friend. We never let her go out now, unless one of us accompanied her. I had begun to dread that Covin's revenge might find an outlet in that way. He was fond of the child and hated me; suppose that he kidnapped her? That would have been almost worse than killing me, for life would no longer be worth having without Gracie.

However, nothing happened till the day of audience, when I presented myself at the court, supported by the goodly person of the professor. Hetty and Gracie were with Mrs. Professor. I would not have left them at home for worlds. The professor had given it as his decisive opinion that I should only leave the court in the custody of the gendarmes. He had strongly advised my leaving before the case came on by the direct route for Charing Cross. "It isn't too late now," he whispered, as we entered the court, and saw the lowering face of the man Covin, who stood leaning over the barrier. "The diligence starts in five minutes. I'll appear for you and say you're taken suddenly ill."

"Otez vos chapeaux," cried the *huissier*, and the little judge entered in state in his robes, with the Calvinistic-looking velvet cap and the stout *greffier* behind him with the book.

You may know the restless misery of waiting in a court of justice expecting the sonorous call of the usher. How you long to have it over and done for, and yet you hail every postponement as a welcome reprieve. Case after case came on, and still not mine; finally the court rose. Ah! it seemed that matters of "conciliation" were heard in private after the public sitting. And then followed another spell of waiting outside the judge's chamber. Covin and I brought face to face together. He kept his eyes fixed upon the ground, and looked thin and dejected. I would have given a good deal to have said to him—"Let us finish this, and go and chink glasses together." But pride forbade, even had I felt satisfied that my advances would be received in a suitable spirit.

"Barton et Covin," drawled the *greffier*, popping his head out of the door.

The judge heard both our stories, and then, eyeing Covin severely, told him that he had a very bad opinion of him, and that he would not advise him to come before the court too often. But in the meantime he had let his *cour* to this Monsieur Anglais and received the money. Had he paid his rent to his proprietor?

Covin admitted that he had not. No, not for more than a year. Not since the dispute they had together when the proprietor ran against the point of his knife.

"Ah!" said the judge, shaking his head sagely, "what did I say?" And then he announced his decision briskly. "Let the Monsieur Anglais take Covin's *cour* and house off his hands, paying the arrears of rent. Covin to have a month in which to remove his furniture, and then to make himself scarce, and betake himself to a neighbourhood where he may be better appreciated because not so well known."

A verdict that dissatisfies equally both plaintiff and defendant, must necessarily be based on the immutable principles of justice. They were there, no doubt, these principles, although we could not see them.

"But my foot!" cried Covin.

"Served you right for putting it in the way of a scythe."

"And the arrears of rent—why should *I* pay them?" I urged.

"Consider what might have happened from your want of care and judgment."

We left the court at the same moment.

"And this is conciliation," I murmured.

Covin gave me one long sidelong glance full of malice. Were we reconciled? It hardly seemed so.

CHAPTER III.

Who tolled the Bell.

The professor was highly indignant at the verdict. I think that he had counted much upon my going to prison. Not that he bears me any personal ill-will, but, as I said before, he has an insatiable appetite for information. My experiences in a French prison would have furnished him with the nucleus of a long-winded article.

On the same day I was accosted by my new "proprietor," who seemed quite satisfied with the decision of the court, as well he might be. In fact, like everyone else, he had been afraid of Covin. Even when the latter was in prison he had not dared to evict him. But now it was a different thing altogether. I was the animal selected to bell the cat. Whatever steps were taken to evict Covin, that individual would give me the credit of it all. And thus, in a most inexplicable way, and without any volition on my part, I had been thrown into the relationship, of all others most dangerous, with a man like Covin. Despite the protection of the little judge and the fat *greffier*, the nights would soon be long and dark, and who could guard me from the vengeance of a desperate man?

Still it was to be hoped that Covin would give up peaceable possession. The arrangement was not a bad one for him. He saved his furniture, which might otherwise have been seized, and he could not expect to live the rest of his life rent-free in another man's house. During the month's delay accorded him, Covin was frequently to be seen. Gracie met him more than once and talked to him.

"Why do you drive poor père Covin away?" she asked, after one of these interviews. "Is it not wicked to turn people out of their houses?"

But at the end of the month Covin disappeared. The house locked up, and no vestige of occupation about it. He had no intention evidently of giving up peaceable possession. People said that he sometimes came to the place at night, but no light was ever seen there. All his movements were secret and mysterious. We gave him plenty of rope, but at the end of another two months legal steps were taken for his eviction. The judge, the mayor, the *greffier*, all the officials were in attendance. The cottage was summoned to surrender. It made no reply. Thereupon, after three several demands for admittance, the door was broken open. There was nothing inside but a worm-eaten oaken "buffet," and a pile of fishing-nets. These last, being implements of labour, were not seizable. Covin had left them there, no doubt, intending, if they were damaged, to proceed against me. However, the place was cleared out, and the nets deposited at the *mairie*; and now I thought I should be able to let the cottage and thus diminish the cost of the *cour*. Already I had had several applications for it, houses being in great demand; but I had not yet settled upon a tenant, being anxious to get a neighbour to my taste. But when I offered the place to the man I had chosen, to my surprise, he declined at once to take it. And it was the same with all the rest of my proposed tenants. They were very sorry, but the house would not suit. Presently I found out the reason. Covin had made it known in the village that he had sworn a great oath that the first intruder who slept in his house should not leave it alive. In vain I rallied the people upon their cowardice.

"Well," said the stoutest and most courageous among them, "if Monsieur will himself sleep there for the first time, I agree to take the cottage without another word."

I soon saw that this was the only way to quench the dread of Covin in the minds of the villagers, and as long as that dread lasted there was no chance of letting the cottage. I felt too that there was a kind of challenge to my courage in the man's insolent threat. Therefore I made known in the village that on such a night I would sleep at Covin's cottage. I should be armed with a loaded revolver, and let jokers beware, for I should certainly fire upon anyone who disturbed me.

Hettie was very much averse to my spending the night at Covin's cottage alone, and, to satisfy her, I had asked the professor to join me in making a night there, hinting at Irish whisky and strong English cut tobacco, which was taking the learned man on his weak side. But he declined with a precipitation that I thought argued ill for his courage. And then I made up my mind to undertake the adventure alone.

It was a rough wet night when I turned out on my expedition. The sound of the bolts and bars shot to behind me, as I left my own door, was rather disheartening; if I had not publicly pledged myself to the adventure, I think I should have postponed it to another occasion. In

the village all the lights were out, my lantern was extinguished before many minutes. The wind howled in a melancholy fashion with a great swaying rushing sound from the forest, as I stumbled along the steep winding path that led to Covin's. I had to grope for the garden gate in the darkness, and as I touched the handle the door of the loft went to with a loud bang. I had not thought of locking that, and now the wind had got it open and was blowing about it, or perhaps it was Covin on the look-out for me. I climbed up the outside stair that led to the loft, sheltered by the overhanging eaves of the thatched gable, closed the door and locked it, first lighting my lantern in the shelter, and looking carefully round. Then I made my way to the front door along the garden path, all choked up by luxuriant vegetable growth. The branches and tendrils of the unpruned vine caught at me and drew me back like detaining fingers, but I went on and opened the door boldly.

The first thing I came in contact with was an object hanging from the rafters, something in the shape of a man swinging slowly round. It was Covin no doubt. Yes, there he was in his habits as he had lived, coat, trousers, and fisherman's boots—but nothing inside them. Simply Covin's clothes hanging there. It was a relief for the moment, and yet the fact itself was startling. The clothes were Covin's, they conveyed a distinct impression of their owner. They had not been there in the morning. Covin must, therefore, have visited the place very recently; perhaps even now he was hidden somewhere within. Perhaps, too, there was a secret meaning and significance in this hanging suit of clothes. Was a challenge conveyed in it? Why was not the professor here to tell me what it signified in his wretched code of primitive morals?

I soon satisfied myself that Covin was not concealed on the premises, and I discovered too how he might have effected both exit and entrance. There was a window unfastened in the inner room quite big enough for the purpose, and the marks of muddy feet fresh upon it. But why should he have taken all the trouble?

Oh! there was a paper pinned to the suit of clothes. It was the summons Covin had received to appear in 'conciliation.' There was a significance about this, as if it had been put there in mockery. Anyhow, whatever might be meant, Covin should see how I estimated his threats. I cut down Covin's clothes, and, squeezing them into a bundle, threw them out of the window. Then I closed all the shutters and fastenings, and lay down on the mattress I had sent up for the purpose, with my rugs carefully wrapped about me and the loaded revolver ready to my hand.

I had lit a fire in the hearth with faggots, and that at first threw a bright glow, but by degrees the light dwindled and went out. The wind roared and bellowed as if the forest had been full of wild beasts. But I was tired and must have slept, although I was not conscious of it when I finally found myself awake. I was awake, but with some of the delusions of sleep. I had an idea that I was being tried for making away with Covin, and that the verdict was 'Guilty, to be beaten with a

rod of fire.' And there was the fiery rod sure enough—floating in the air as it seemed to me. Aroused to full consciousness, I gazed at it in a panic of nervous horror. The fiery rod resolved itself into a glare of light, shining through a longitudinal crack in the wooden shutter. That window looked over towards my house. What was the cause of the light? There was no moon. Could it be a fire? I threw open the shutter. There was a bright flare of light from just below and luminous smoke rising through the trees. At the moment the terrible thought shot through my brain. 'My house has been fired. Perhaps here is Covin's revenge!'

In my mad rush towards home I remembered that a ladder was the most indispensable thing, and that there was one under the eaves of the stable. I should save precious moments if I caught this up on my way. There was now no doubt of the fire; the sky all of a glow and a vivid tongue of flame darting heavenwards. The ladder had been removed; the fiend who had planned this had carried out his wicked work completely. I hurried on. The village was already alive, and I heard the great church-bell clanging out the alarm vigorously. My home was in a blaze: what had become of wife and child?

Happily my wife was safe; she stood by the garden gate wrapped in a cloak—half-distracted, wringing her hands and crying.

Where was Gracie? No one answered my frantic demand, and next moment I was trying to clamber up to the upper windows by the trellis-work, that, rotten with age, gave way beneath me. But Hetty seized me. "She is not there; she is safe from the fire, but she is gone, snatched away from me."

"By whom?"

"By Covin."

"Which way?"

"Over the hedge there."

I ran in the direction pointed out, where there was a weak place in the hedge, through which the high road might be reached. Something had caught in the brambles—a morsel of Gracie's little night-dress. There were footsteps down to the road, and there they ceased to be traceable in the slush. I could not tell which way he had turned. I must go back to the house and ask my neighbours to help me in the pursuit, to run in various directions. For my own part, I would make for the river, for in that direction I judged he had gone.

When I reached the house again the fire was out. The neighbours had smothered it with blankets and carpets. It had been a petroleum fire, 'soon kindled and soon burned.' The *maire* was on the scene by this time, and the *curé*. I told them what had happened, besought them to aid me at once in the search for the man who had fired my house and stolen my child. They could hardly believe such an outrage to be possible in this law-abiding country, but there was the patent fact. Gracie was gone, and Covin had taken her.

"He will not harm her, I guarantee that," said the *curé*.

"Ah! you always had a better opinion of him than he deserved," remarked the *maire* drily. "But compose yourself, monsieur; the police will find her quickly. To a poor man like Covin a child is not a valuable treasure. But to set fire to your house, ah, that was malice."

Here Hetty drew me aside.

"It was not Covin," she whispered, in a faltering tone, "who set fire to the house; it was I, accidentally."

"Not Covin, but you?" I repeated, quite bewildered.

"Yes; I wanted plenty of light, as you had left me all alone, and before I went to bed I lighted the big 'pétrole' lamp. And I upset it: the flames were between me and the door. I ran to the window and screamed."

"Well, and what then?"

"Why, a man came with a ladder, and we escaped, I and Gracie."

"And the man was——"

"Covin."

This cast a new and startling light upon the affair. Covin the rescuer, and not the criminal! But why should he have taken Gracie? Probably, although some instinct of courage and humanity had brought him to the help of my wife, yet finding his enemy's daughter in his hands the impulse to revenge himself had become too strong.

"In the meantime," said the *maire*, "before doing anything we must dress a *procès-verbal*. And, first, for the person who gave the earliest alarm of the fire—of course, monsieur will recompense him handsomely. Let him come forward."

But no one came forward to claim the reward or the thanks of the commune. This was a curious circumstance among people not given to hiding their good deeds, especially when a reward is in question.

"And who set the bell going?" asked the *curé*, "and roused us all from our sleep? The same brave fellow doubtless."

"Perhaps he is still in the church," said the *maire*.

"Let us go and see," suggested the *curé*.

The church is only just across the road, and the *curé* admits us through the sacristy door. A rude ancient church, grotesque with age, thick squat columns, with quaint curved volutes, looking in the dim light like so many huge horned monsters. There is a light shining in the space behind the altar, where there is a highly-tinselled shrine of the Virgin. A taper is burning before the shrine, and by the light we can make out a bundle of something lying in front. The *curé* stoops down and lifts the corner of a shawl; there is a child fast asleep—it is Gracie.

The *curé* takes her up tenderly in his arms. She awakes and begins to cry, till, seeing her father's face among those about her, she gladly nestles in his arms. I hurry away, too full of joy and gratitude to say a word. Was this then Covin's revenge?

For a long time after that, I tried in vain to find Covin. I let it be

known in the village that he might come back to his cottage whenever he liked and not a word to be said about arrears. Enough money too to furnish it well, or to buy a new boat. But although I fancy that he heard of the offer, he never took advantage of it. One day, however, I heard that he had been seen in the village, and that his boat was moored in the river close by. I managed to intercept him with Gracie, and offered my hand. Covin put his behind his back.

"Come, let us be friends," I said.

"Can I be friends with a man who has treated my best clothes like this?" said Covin, undoing his bundle and holding up the suit that I had thrown out of the window. I had thought nothing more about it, and certainly the clothes had suffered not a little from exposure.

"I am very sorry; but you shall have a new suit."

"Pardon, monsieur, the old ones suited me very well."

"Come! for the child's sake," I said, "let me thank you."

"Monsieur," began Covin, with some dignity, "I deserve no thanks, for I had it in my heart to do you a great injury. I thought to come upon you as you slept in my cottage, and I hung these clothes up as a warning to you, and I said to myself, if he respects my clothes, I will not harm him. But you did not respect my clothes, and then I determined to attack you as you slept. Then I saw a gleam of fire, and heard the screams of a woman. I am a Frenchman—you know the rest. But do I love you, monsieur, any better for that? You have turned me away from my hearth; it was but a poor hearth, cold and neglected, but once I had a little daughter like yours, a wife too, industrious and careful, and then there was happiness around it, of which I have now only the memory. And from this hearth you thrust me forth."

"Come back to it, Covin, come and be my neighbour."

"Adieu, monsieur," as if he had not heard me.

"Let me be your friend for what you have done for me and mine."

"Adieu, monsieur," repeated Covin, stonily, as if an injury were a precious possession of which none should deprive him.

"Gracie, speak to him," I said to the child; "go and ask him to stay."

"Do stay, père Covin," she cried; "papa will no more be wicked with you, and you shall make me again a little boat."

Covin shook his head sternly; but he snatched up the child and kissed her warmly. Then, as if he could not trust himself any longer, he sprang hastily into his boat and pushed off. He glided away down the slow sullen stream, and was soon lost to sight in the mist and gloom of coming night. Nor has he ever been seen in our neighbourhood since. His cottage is still empty, and no one will venture to occupy it. The people in the village believe that he still watches over the place, and that anyone who ventured to occupy it would have to reckon with Covin's revenge.

Literary Coincidences.*

Sir Henry Wotton, whose name is permanently perhaps, and certainly pleasantly, associated with his definition of an ambassador—*Vir bonus peregre missus ad mentiendum reipublicæ causa*; a good fellow sent abroad to utter falsehoods for the service of his country—was possibly not a little rash in writing the following inscription for his grave:— "Here lies the first author of the sentence, *Disputandi pruritus ecclesiarum scabies.*" The world has grown so old, and so large a portion of its history has fallen off into the waters of oblivion, that to assert oneself the first in aught is but a temerarious undertaking. Some years have passed since Solomon said there was nothing new under the sun, and he was accounted wise. The more a man enters into any subject of science, the more he discovers of that which is in that which has been. Dive into the history of mechanism, it becomes difficult to prove any one the inventor of any particular machine. It is an easy task only for those who have never tried to trace to its origin a popular tale. Berkeley, in his theory of the non-existence of body, had a predecessor in Protagoras; the principle of Locke, that all knowledge is the result of experience, was the principle of Aristotle; and Descartes' *Cogito, ergo sum*, is not unlike the expression of Augustin, in his *De Civitate Dei*: "*Si enim fallor, sum; nam qui non est, utique nec falli potest, ac per hoc sum, si fallor.*" The discovery of the circulation of the blood is ticketed to Harvey; but Apuleius, explaining a passage of Plato in the *Timæus*, makes us imagine that both that philosopher and himself were well acquainted with it, some few years before the birth of the famous physician who accompanied Charles at the battle of Edgehill. "The passages of the veins," says the author of the *Golden Ass*, "arise from the region of the heart, transfer through the breathing holes of the lungs the life which they have received from the heart, and from that place again, divided through the members, assist respiration in the whole man." Nay, more, some go so far as to assert that Harvey was not the first, even of the moderns, to teach this doctrine, but that the famous Paul Sarpi communicated the secret to Fabricius de Aquapendente, a professor of medicine at Padua in the sixteenth century, and that it was by him confided to Harvey, one of his pupils in the University.

The field of *belles lettres* offers no exception to the general rule of the royal poet who so satisfactorily answered all the Queen of Sheba's riddles. Literary coincidences are not things of yesterday. Pliny, in the dedication to his friend Vespasian, of his treatise on natural history,

* See *Cornhill Magazine* for March, 1878.

refers to them as abundantly existent before his time. But he refers to them in a somewhat ungracious manner. Ignorant of the politeness which adorns our later age, he describes them as direct thefts : "*Scito enim conferentem auctores me deprehendisse a juratissimis et proximis veteres transcriptos ad verbum.*" "You must know," he tells the Emperor, "that in my comparison of various works, I found that our latest writers, men whom you might have sworn most honest fellows, have given us nothing but verbal transcripts of the more ancient authors." The amount of credit due to Pliny in this matter it is not easy to determine. The great historian was by no means a man of singular veracity. Indeed, some have gone so far as to say that he had attained a perfect intrepidity in uttering the most shameless lies. They adduce as proof his assertions concerning the modesty of elephants, and the great delight experienced by the mouse in filching and eating silver and gold. Probably Pliny's little sentence about plagiarism is not to be precisely understood. It served indeed admirably for a prefatory rhetorical flourish about his own ethical excellence. "You may have an argument of my own honest disposition," he says, "in that I have prefaced my volumes with the names of those authors whom I have consulted. For I consider it not only as courteous, but also as a sign of ingenuous modesty so to do." It is unfortunate that there is as little mention of Dioscorides, with whose work there are many startling coincidences in his own, as there is in Virgil's *Eclogues* of Theocritus, in his *Georgics* of Aratus or Hesiod, or in his *Æneid* of Homer or Pisander. Pliny must not, however, on account of this omission, be uncharitably charged, as he has not hesitated to charge others, with pluming himself like that ill-advised jackdaw in alien feathers. "A ship," says Emerson, "is but a quotation from a forest," and Pliny has doubtless so improved on many of the tales of his predecessors that they would be as little likely to recognise them for their own work as Shakespeare to understand the latest edition of *Hamlet*. The architect does not supply the material, but his art arranges the iron and stone in such a way that the resultant whole, if not habitable, is at least unique. Pliny, if not instructive, is decidedly amusing.

Such, however, is the condition of human nature that writers are more frequently charged with the conduct of the ant than with that of the bee. Often we find an indictment of plagiarism preferred against some unlucky wights who openly avowed their intention of translation or paraphrase. One of the best of these instances—they are plentiful as blackberries—is the case of Bussy Rabutin and the famous Tom Brown of facetious memory, who, according to Addison, introduced the modern sect of syncopists. Bussy Rabutin, in one of his letters to Madame de S——, sends for her opinion and her amusement the following epigram among many more :—

Je ne vous aime point, Hylas,
Je n'en sçaurois dire la cause :
Je sçai seulement une chose ;
C'est que je ne vous aime pas.

Tom Brown being threatened with expulsion by Dr. Fell, the Dean of Christ Church, for a certain freak of the blood, obtained forgiveness by some lines which are usually attributed to Dr. Johnson—verses far better known than the occasion of their composition. An accusation of plagiarism has been accordingly entered against one of these gentlemen, though it is quite plain, and indeed both of them expressly state, that their verses are but a rendering of Martial's well-known lines to Sabidius:—

Non amo te, Sabidi, nec possum dicere quare,
Hoc tantum possum dicere, non amo te.

Who, however, this Sabidius was, against whom the Spanish poet conceived so apparently unreasonable an antipathy, is still less generally understood than who was Dr. Fell or the Jean of Clement Marot:—

Jean, je ne t'aime point, beau sire,
Et ne sais quell' mouche me poing,
Ni pourquoi c'est; je ne puis dire,
Sinon que je ne t'aime point.

As readily, though with as little justice, is the accusation of plagiarism urged against him who has attributed to the fecundity of his fancy the fruit of his unconscious recollection. This man would be willing enough to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, but unfortunately he has enjoyed so long the usufruct of Cæsar's property, that he has forgotten the original ownership, and imagines it in all good faith to be his own. He has been so long nourished on Cæsar that he has converted Cæsar into his own substance. And so he goes on, good man, a cooking his meat as the Rabbin say, in another's cauldron, never attempting, as the real plagiarist, to conceal Cæsar by any transposition or change of words, never dragging his oxen, like the astute Apollo, backwards to hide their traces, but, ever boldly asserting his originality, he runs the race set before him without any fear of what Molière calls *le bois vert*.

Novelty is of little value unless accompanied by excellence. That originality is not always desirable it was, perhaps, one of the aims of the *Rehearsal* to represent. Mr. Bayes despises Jonson and Beaumont, that "borrowed all they writ from nature"—a sentiment which must be swallowed, if at all, *cum grano salis* to prevent indigestion—and fetches purely out of his own fancy such novelties as a play without a plot, the Two Kings of Brentford, the dead men rising at F♭, and the sudden love fit of Prince Volscius, which leaves him in one boot expressing himself in elevated language. But, instead of treading on no man's heels, and making his flight on his own wings, Bayes would have done better for his own interest, though it must be confessed the play would then have been much less amusing, had he employed his compendious way of wit, which lay in consulting his table-book when he had anything to invent, and there at one view seen all that Seneca, Persius, Pliny, Plutarch, and the rest had ever said upon the subject.

Omitting the numerous coincidences among the smaller fry of writers, a curious one, though of idea only, may be found in Ben Jonson and Shakespeare.

In the pastoral drama of the *Sad Shepherd*, which rare Ben left in torso, after feasting the public for more than forty years, perhaps the most original of his poems, as he preferred to call them, Maudlin, the witch, in her conversation with her daughter Douce, gives her to know she may meet her in many shapes, but may always distinguish her by a "browdered belt with characters." This magic belt, which was wrought at the burial of Maudlin's own mother, over her grave in the moonshine, by "a gypsan lady and a right beldame," recalls the well-known handkerchief in *Othello*, which was given to his mother by an Egyptian who was a charmer, sewed by an ancient sibyl in her prophetic fury, made of the silk of hallowed worms, and dyed in the mummy of maidens' hearts.

Another resemblance between Jonson and Shakespeare may be set down as a commonplace of rhetoric. The noble-minded Gratiano, when the fallen Jew in his utter despair, accepting the last and greatest insult offered to him, consents to become a Christian in order to save the robbery of half his riches, insults this typical convert of sincere conviction thus—

> In christening thou shalt have two godfathers;
> Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,
> To bring thee to the gallows, not the font.

So in *The Devil is an Ass*, the Norfolk squire Fitzdottrell says to Lady Tailbush's gentleman-usher—

> I will leave you
> To your godfathers in law; let twelve men work.

Again, in the *Sad Shepherd*, kind Karolin asks the courteous Lionel why he so surveyed and circumscribed him,

> As if you stuck one eye into my breast,
> And with the other took my whole dimensions.

The similitude of a pair of compasses had also been employed, with greater taste perhaps, if only equal ingenuity, by Donne, in his little poem forbidding mourning, called *Valediction*. Here he advises his love that, though he must leave her, their two souls are not separated, but only expanded like gold beat to airy thinness; that, assured of this communion of the mind, she need not care for that of eyes, lips, and hands; and finally this head of the metaphysical school says, if their souls be two, they are but like a pair of compasses—

> Thy soul, the fixed foot, makes no show
> To move, but doth, if th' other do.
> And though it in the centre sit,
> Yet when the other far doth roam,
> *It leans and hearkens after it,*
> *And grows erect, as that comes home.*
> Such wilt thou be to me, who must,
> Like th' other foot, obliquely run,
> *Thy firmness makes my circle just,*
> And makes me end where I begun.

The thoughts contained in the italicised lines may form an apology for the length of this quotation.

But another poet, somewhat less known than even the little-known Donne, had before him adorned his verses with the same image. That poet—no indifferent one, though of little reputation in Europe—is the famous Persian, Hakim Umar Khayyam. Born in the latter half of the eleventh century, this "tentmaker," as his name signifies, distinguished himself alike as a philosopher and a mathematician. In one of his *Rubayyat*, or "Quatrains," he wrote—

> O my soul! I and you are the similitude of a pair of compasses;
> Although we make two heads we possess but one body;
> At present we move round one point in a circle,
> Afterwards we shall again surely come together.

It is uncertain to whom Khayyam addressed his quâtrain. It may be to a heavenly, or, as is much more likely, to an earthly love. Dr. Johnson seems not to have approved of this singular comparison. Regarding the other leg of Donne's compasses as his wife, he is in doubt whether the idea be more remarkable for ingenuity or absurdity.

Another *Rubayyat* of Khayyam offers a coincidence with some verses of Tennyson. Quoth Umar, likening life to a game of chess,

> We are the pieces, and Destiny plays the game;
> This is a matter of fact and no metaphor;
> We are the puppets on the chess-board of being,
> And go back one by one into the box of annihilation.

Compared with this early Persian poem, divested as it necessarily must be for the English reader of all its native verbal grace and poesy, what a lapse of energy and earnestness of expression is to be lamented in the lines of our Poet-Laureate, set in the mouth of Maud's unlucky lover!—

> Do we move ourselves, or are moved by an unseen hand at a game
> That pushes us off from the board, and others ever succeed.

The reader will scarcely need to be reminded of the same illustration in the mouth of Sancho Panza, who caps his master's comparison of all the world to a stage, by saying it is also as in the game of chess; while the game lasts each piece has its own particular office, but as soon as the game is over, all the pieces are mixed up together and cast higgledy-piggledy into a bag, which is all one, says Sancho, with casting our dead bodies into the tomb.

In the drama of Jonson already referred to, one of the puns reminds us of Crashaw. Quoth Maid Marian to Robin Hood, "You are a wanton;" to which Robin replies, "One, I do confess, I wanted till you came." The same play on words, which will be rendered better if we remember the old pronunciation of "one," occurs in Crashaw's *Steps to the Temple*, who, in a version of the Twenty-third Psalm, speaking of himself under the similitude of a sheep, sings:—

Plenty wears me at her breast,
Whose sweet temper teaches me
Nor wanton, nor in want to be.

A line in the prologue to the same drama reminds us of Donne :—

What knows the head
Of a calm river whom the feet have drowned!

says the Prologue, referring to Æglamour's supposed loss of his lady, Earine, in the Trent. The author of *Biathanatos*, that remarkable justification of suicide, compact of equal audacity and wit, speaking of Justice, in verses unusually harmonious, thus apostrophises her :—

Greatest and fairest Empress, know you this!
Alas! no more than Thames' calm head doth know
Whose meads her arms drown, or whose corn o'erflow.

In *Cynthia's Revels, or the Fountain of Self-Love*, the plot of which play, it has been said, is so finely spun that no eye perhaps but Jonson's has ever been able to trace it, the optics of the well-dieted Amorphus have drunk the spirit of beauty in some eight score and eighteen princes' courts, where he has been fortunate in the amours of three hundred forty and five ladies, all nobly, if not princely descended; whose names, he adds in confirmation, he has in catalogue. Leporello, in La Porte's well-known version of the *Don Juan* story, which was copied from Tirso de Molina (Gabriel Tellez) by Molière, T. Corneille, Shadwell, and Goldoni, introducing to the notice of the deceived Elvira a catalogue of the ladies his master had loved, speaks of six hundred and forty in Italy, and one thousand and three in Spain, among them countesses, baronesses, marchionesses, princesses, and so on, as every reader will remember.

Good Master Fenton, in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, dreading the result even of such feeble wooing of sweet Anne Page as that of Slender, when supported by her father's authority, and not quite secure against Dr. Caius, when countenanced by her mother, says he must "advance the colours of his love and not retire." Romeo, addressing the sleeping Juliet, says beauty's

Ensign is crimson in her lips, and in her cheeks,
And death's pale flag is not advanced there.

Marini, in one of his *Lugubrious Rhymes*, has the same remarkable image. His heavenly lady, or rather earthly goddess, lay on her bed with her fair eyes closed in everlasting evening, while her mournful lover was weeping by her side—

Morte la'nsegna sua pallida e bianca
Vincitrice spiegò sul volto mio.

He, says Tennyson, never tasted pure love who first flung the bitter seed among mankind:—

That could the dead, whose dying eyes
Were closed with wail, resume their life,
They would but find in child and wife
An iron welcome when they rise.

If the poet did not borrow his observation from Sadi, there is certainly a very curious coincidence between him and the author of the *Gulistan*. That ancient writer showed no little knowledge of human nature in these lines—

Oh! if the dead man might come again,
Among the members of his race and of his kindred;
The return of the inheritance would be harder
To the heir than the death of his relation!

There are, as indeed might easily be supposed, some wonderfully exact parallels to the idea of the author of *Ecclesiastes*, who praised the dead more than the living, and considered the man who had not yet been as far better off than both of them. A literal translation of one of the Gnomic sentences of *Theognis* runs thus :—"For mortals the very best thing of all is not to be born, or look on the light of the piercing sun; but being born, it is best to pass as quickly as possible to the portals of Hades, and lie hidden under a large heap of earth." In one of the choruses in the *Œdipus Coloneus*, we find that for a person never to have been born beats everything; but, if he appears at all, then by far the next best thing is to return as quickly as may be whence he came. The advice given by the captive Silenus to King Midas, in return for his liberation, was that by far the best for man is not to be born, the next best as soon as possible to die. And though Lactantius exclaims against the ineptitude of this opinion, and thinks it worthily set in the mouth of such a one as Silenus, it is supported by Pliny, Ausonius, Seneca, Alexis, and many more authorities than the reader would probably care to consult.

Such coincidences of thought are so numerous and so frequent that they seem to require no further notice than has been already bestowed upon them. Even in these plagiarism is not seldom scented by keener noses. The liberal Dr. Johnson, for instance, accuses the "out-of-fashion" Cowley, as Lamb calls him in his letter to Coleridge, of obligations to Grotius and Donne. Sir John Denham has, however, shown the improbability of the charge. Indeed, the author of *Cooper's Hill* directly states that, although no author was unknown to Cowley, yet "what he writ was all his own." Swift also, by-the-bye, in his verses on his own death, says he was never known to steal a hint, but "what he writ was all his own." Here, then, is a case in which Denham's anxiety to save Cowley from any imputation of borrowing, and Swift's modest consciousness of his own entire innocence in that respect, have curiously enough given rise to precisely the same expression of independent thought. A better example could not easily be found to show how an analogous or identical subject may suggest not only similar ideas, but exactly the same words.

There is much verbal likeness between some of the prayers of his

Majesty King Charles I. and those of King David according to Milton; but this "borrowing," as he calls it, is inconsiderable when confronted with another likeness in Charles's devotions to Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*, which the same Milton stigmatises as theft. The naughty widow Cecropia, in that novel, listening, after her own ungracious method of subtle proceeding, outside the door of Pamela's chamber, hears her utter a certain prayer. This very prayer, says the author of the *Eikonoklastes*, by a gross cozenage, was popped into the hand of the grave Bishop Juxon by the monarch as his own composition, in the very moment of his death, and afterwards published in the *Eikon Basilike*. It is indeed the fact that the two prayers are word for word alike. Milton will not on this occasion allow any possibility of double inspiration or new invention, but roundly abuses the King for filching in his bankrupt devotion an orison of a heathen praying to a heathen, from a vain amatorious poem. He seems to think that the blessed martyr ought to have had recourse, wanting prayers of his own, to the Christian Liturgy, instead of offering up a *réchauffé* of an ethnic petition to a buzzard idol. The rest of his petition may have been borrowed, adds the ingenuous poet, from the Lord knows where. Perhaps from the French *Astræa*, perhaps from the Spanish *Diana*—*Amadis* and *Palmerin* would hardly scape him. Milton, it must be remembered, had a grudge against his most gracious sovereign; but others, apparently from pure natural malice, have set Charles and his chaplain in the same condemnation. These hissing serpents which surround the cradle of genius assert that, if the King filched aught, he did but follow the example of his holy father. Jeremy Taylor, in his *Rule and Exercises of Holy Dying*, speaking of the best and most passionate sermons that were ever preached, the sermons on the stones of sepulchres, tells us that the kings of Spain lived and were buried in the same Escurial—a circumstance one would imagine hostile to good health, however adminicular to morality. Our own kings are contented with being crowned in Westminster Abbey, the mausoleum of their predecessors. There, says the British Chrysostom, is "an acre sown with royal seed, the copy of the greatest change, from living like gods to die like men." The Chaplain in Ordinary to the first Charles was remarkable for the original lustre of his diction, which may be compared, to use his own words, to the shine of a dove's back, or the glistening image of a rainbow; but Francis Beaumont, who died when Taylor was a baby, chancing to hit on the same idea before him, has expressed it with almost equal elegance. After saying, in his poem on the tombs in Westminster, that the potentates buried there preach from their pulpits, sealed with dust, the vanity of all earthly ambition, he adds:—

> Here's an acre sown indeed
> With the richest royalest seed,
> Here the bones of birth have cried,
> Though gods they were, as men they died.

All that the charitable reader will perceive in these, and many more

passages like these, is a curious coincidence. Such a coincidence with other writers occurs frequently enough in Milton himself. Not to mention his often concurrence with ancient and foreign authors, here is an instance of similarity to one of his own country, and but little before his time. The imperial ensign of that tall cherub Azazel, advanced full high over the hosts of the fallen Archangel, shone "like a meteor streaming to the wind." The loose beard and hoary hair of Gray's Bard, also, by the way, "streamed like a meteor to the troubled air." This coincidence has been more frequently noted than the resemblance of both passages to a line in Heywood's *Four Prentices of London*, written certainly not later than the last year of the sixteenth century. Turnus, the envoy of the Persian Sophy, speaking of his master's victorious flag, that hangs blowing defiance on Sion towers, tells us that it shows

> Like a red meteor in the troubled air.

Whether Milton unconsciously copied Heywood, or whether Gray unconsciously copied Milton, is of course uncertain. Thoughts, it has been often said, are like materials in a mosaic, less admirable in themselves than in their arrangement. But in this case the difference in the arrangement is exceedingly small. Filtered through a new medium, the old liquid has not put on a new appearance. Neither Gray nor Milton has changed Heywood's copper into gold. This is not the case of a form of mud afterwards animated with fire from heaven; as much fire as the thought seems capable of containing was given to it in its creation by the author of the *Four Prentices*. In neither of its succeeding avatars has it caught any more.

Waller in some verses to Charles's Queen, occasioned, as he says, by the sight of her picture, speaks of Charles at the Gallic Court thus :—

> There public care with private passion fought
> A doubtful combat in his noble thought.

Charles was very much in the same condition with Erminia, whom Fairfax, the translator of Tasso, represents as longing to cure her wounded knight, and yet half hindered by womanly pudency. This probably is the meaning of the term "honour" in Fairfax's lines :—

> For in the secret of her troubled thought
> A doubtful combat love and honour fought.

When somebody had said that Sacharissa painted herself, a feminine procedure seldom unfashionable, Waller, who was, or, to keep his muse in exercise, affected to be in love with her, allowed the observation to be true in that sense only in which

> Lavish nature with her best attire
> Paints the gay spring.

Clarion, the first of all the race of silver-winged flies which possess the

kingdom of the air, in Spenser's *Muiopotmos, or Butterfly's Fate*, refreshes his spirits in the gay gardens

> Where lavish nature in her best attire
> Pours forth sweet odours.

Some verses to Amoret (a certain Lady Sophia Murray; it is said, but what does it matter?), in which Waller wishes to be informed whether that lady's attractive power lay in her body or in her soul, he commences thus:—

> Amoret, the milky way,
> Framed of many nameless stars.

The detractor's malevolence might refer these lines to the old tragedy of *Brennoralt*, by Sir John Suckling, wherein the hero, gazing on Francelia asleep, says—

> Her face is like the milky way i' th' sky,
> A meeting of gentle lights without a name.

Here we have hardly that improvement which is always to be desired. In another passage of Waller the coincidence is so curiously exact that no question of improvement can arise. The Marquis of Badajoz, seeing his ship on fire, in one of our fights with Spain, laid him by his burning lady's side—

> And, since he could not save her, with her died.

When, in the last book of Fairfax's Tasso, the virago, Gildippe, who preferred the spear to the spindle, has been slaughtered by the Soldan, and the same fate has overtaken her adorer Edward, that hero

> Fell by her side,
> And, for he could not save her, with her died.

Here the resemblance is as remarkable as any in him, whom the *Looker-on* with inimitable humour has called that great original writer, the author of *Tristram Shandy*.

Pope presents a field in which the reader may cut down coincidences in great swaths, almost at every step through his corn. The slipshod Sibyl, who leads King Cibber, in the *Dunciad*, to the Elysian shades, where he meets the ghost of Settle, is said by Pope to have her tresses, which were never washed save in the waters of Castalia, "staring from poetic dreams." The word "staring" is employed in the same unusual sense in the *Tempest*, where the King's son, Ferdinand, is described by Ariel as leaping from his ship with "hair up staring like reeds." The carp, which Pope considered it necessary to catalogue amidst the denizens of Windsor Forest, is "bedropt with gold," and Milton's fish generally, in his account of the Creation, are in a like condition. Pope's rendering in his version of one of Horace's Epistles of *anni euntes* by "the subtle thief of life this paltry time," bears no remote similitude to Milton's "time the subtle thief of youth." The opening music set in the mouth of the love-sick Duke in *Twelfth Night* demands "that strain again; it had a dying fall." Pope had the honour to har-

monise considerably with the great Shakespeare in his *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day*—"the strains decay in a dying fall;" and the conduct of Thomson's nightingale, who, when robbed by the hard hand of unrelenting clowns, sole sitting still, "at every dying fall takes up again her lamentable strain of winding woe," affords another curious coincidence of expression.

Sedley, writing some verses on Don Alonzo, who, for making love to the Infanta of Portugal, is said to have met with the severe misfortune of being cut into little pieces, speaks of his innamorata, the gentle nymph, as confined to a holy gaol, and in commiseration of her dissected suitor,

> Dropping tears with every bead.

Pope's Eloisa imitates and improves on the example of the Infanta, "dropping with every bead too soft a tear," where the addition of the epithet ably distinguishes between the soft water which is the consolation of feminine love, and the hard water which is the rough humour of feminine religion. It had been well if Pope was ever thus superior to his antecedent; but a few lines later, in the same poem of *Eloisa*, we read how a thought of Abelard put to the rout all the pomp of piety—

> Priests, tapers, temples, swim before my sight;

says the afflicted fair, very much as the Phædra, of Edmund Smith, that "lucky poet," in his consummate tragedy, whose heroine is preferred by Dr. Johnson to her Greek, Latin, and French sisters, says, alluding to the effect of the unexpected appearance of Hippolytus at her marriage with Theseus—

> All the idle pomp,
> Priests, altars, victims, swam before my sight.

The tapers and temples were of course more in accordance with the Catholic faith than altars and victims. It is almost unnecessary to add that the play was produced before Pope's piece was written. This certainly seems to be of that kind of borrowing which is not bettered by the borrower, and which, if we may believe Milton, is among good authors accounted plagiary.

When we consider the copious treasures of coincidences which have been detected by critical acumen between the unfortunate Pope and his foregoers in the genealogical table of letters, the character which he gives to Bayes, the hero of the *Dunciad*, becomes invested with a double interest and charm:—

> Next, o'er his books his eyes began to roll,
> In pleasing memory of all he stole;
> How here he sipped, how there he plundered snug,
> And sucked all o'er, like an industrious bug.

We are almost tempted to believe, by the lights of his latest Editor, having regard especially to his *Essay on Criticism*, not the least famous of his poems, or indeed his *Essay on Man*, that as

> A past, vamped, future, old, revived, new piece,
> 'Twixt Plautus, Fletcher, Shakespear, and Corneille,

could make a Cibber, so the same kind of piece, 'twixt Dryden, Boileau, Bolingbroke, Montaigne—not to speak of Cowley, Crashaw, and many more—has done much to make a Pope.

Goldsmith's *Threnodia Augustalis*, in memory of the mother of George III., informs the reader that to her shrine

> Faith shall come, a pilgrim grey,
> To bless the tomb that wraps her clay;
> And calm Religion shall repair,
> To dwell a weeping hermit there.

Collins's ode, written some score of years before, presents a few circumstances of resemblance, which might with unthinking people tend to detract from the originality of Goldsmith. But where the latter has Faith and Religion, the former has Honour and Freedom, and where Collins wrote "turf" the idea of Goldsmith required "tomb." Still the coincidence between the passages is as remarkable an accident as the similarity between the speech of Croaker in the *Goodnatured Man*:—"Life at the greatest and best is but a froward child, that must be humoured and coaxed a little till it falls asleep, and then all the care is over;" and the concluding sentence of Sir William Temple's Essay on Poetry:—"Human life is at the greatest and the best but like a froward child, that must be played with and humoured a little to keep it quiet till it falls asleep, and then the care is over."

Goldsmith's epitaph on the unfortunate bookseller's hack, his college friend, Ned Purdon—who

> Led such a damnable life in this world,
> I don't think he'll wish to come back—

is very like Swift's epitaph on poor G—— :—

> So little justice here he found,
> 'Tis ten to one he'll ne'er come back.

And this again to that on Le Sieur Etienne:—

> En ce monde il eut tant des maux,
> Qu'on ne croit pas qu'il revienne.

The godly man in Islington, who was bitten by a mad dog, but

> The man recovered of the bite,
> The dog it was that died,

was of much the same poisonous nature as Fréron, who, if we may believe Voltaire, proved the death of a snake. The snake bit the ecclesiastic, and,

> Savez-vous ce qui arriva:
> Ce fut le serpent qui creva.

The well-known line in his *Traveller*—

> The pregnant quarry teemed with human form—

is scarcely superior to Thomson's

From the brute rock it called the breathing form.

What Goldsmith left marble he found not made of brick. In his description of Holland, the "broad ocean leaning against the land," though very like Dryden's "Ocean leaning on the sky," in his *Annus Mirabilis*, seems decidedly inferior to it in energy of conception; but, after all, it was very fair for a man, who, according to a speech attributed by Boswell to Johnson, knew so amazingly little—"Sir! he seldom comes where he is not more ignorant than anyone else."

Byron, in his address to the deep and dark blue ocean, which, with persistent iteration, he begs to continue to roll, apostrophises it as the Image of Eternity, and the throne of the Invisible. Immediately afterwards, he adds with a connection of thought too subtle for any but a poet to perceive—

Even from out thy slime,
The monsters of the deep are made.

A similar sentence may be met with in Dryden's *Medal*, written, it is perhaps scarcely necessary to remind the reader, on the striking of the medal to commemorate the return of an Ignoramus, by the grand jury in Shaftesbury's case, when the bill was presented to them against him for high treason. Dryden, in his indignation against the citizens of London, compares that city to the Nile, which, though the cause of fertility and wealth,

Yet monsters from thy large increase we find,
Engendered on the slime thou leavest behind.

It is always, it has been well observed, a delightful task to trace the various independent uses of a sublime thought by various writers.

The passage in *Beppo* is fairly familiar in which Byron describes the budding Miss, half Pertness and half Pout, as fresh from the nursery and "always smelling of bread and butter." Middleton's plays are not such public favourites as Byron's poems, but in one of these, entitled *Your Five Gallants*, which was often in action at the Blackfriars Theatre some two centuries and a half ago, may be found something very similar to the line in Byron's *Beppo*. Goldstone, one of the five Gallants or Sharpers, referring to Fitsgrave, their gull, speaks of him as piping hot from the University, and adds "he smells of buttered loaves yet."

In the *Bride of Abydos*, a Turkish tale, which it would be perhaps not unfashionable to read at the present time, Zuleika, the bride, who, by the way, is not a bride except in a paullo-post-future sense, is said to be the lucky possessor of a certain music breathing from her face, besides having an eye in itself a soul, and purity of grace, whatever this may mean. Lucasta, whom Lovelace, under the name of Orpheus, celebrates as his Eurydice, in his song of *Orpheus to Beasts*, also possesses harmony, the Platonic soul in her eye, has melody of grace, and could beasts view the music of her face, they would drop a tear in consequence. Sir Thomas Browne tells us, in his *Religio Medici*, that he was himself never yet once married, and commends their resolutions who never marry

twice. Yet he is naturally amorous, as he afterwards confesses, of all that is fair, and affects the "music of beauty," the silent note which Cupid strikes far sweeter than any instrument. The idea is not unfamiliar to the student of the *Timæus* of Plato.

The line ἀνὴρ ὁ φεύγων καὶ πάλιν μαχήσεται ascribed to the poet Menander, with its Latin version, *Qui fugiebat rursus prœliabitur*, quoted by Tertullian in his book on "Flight from Persecution," which contains an answer in the negative to the question of his friend Fabius as to whether it was right to avoid it by flight or bribery, we find reproduced by Jean Passerat, in the sixteenth century, in his song *Sur la journée de Senlis* in the *Satyre Menippée* :—

Souvent celui qui demeure
Est cause de son méchef;
Celui qui fuit de bonne heure
Peut combatter de rechef—

and by Butler's *Hudibras*, where Ralph says,

For those that fly may fight again,
Which he can never do that's slain.

Parnell's Anacreontic which begins "Gay Bacchus, liking Estcourt's wine," and tells the disputes which arose between the guests of the god, Comus, Jocus and Cupid, resembles in no slight degree a poem of the Italian poet Augurello, who died about a century and a half before Parnell was born. Augurello's *Gratiarum Convivium* commences thus :—

Invitat olim Bacchus ad cœnam suos,
Comum, Jocum, Cupidinem.

He who has leisure to compare the English and Latin lines will be astonished at the remarkable chance which has rendered them so much alike. Almost as much alike is Voltaire's story in *Zadig* of the Angel Jesrad to Parnell's *Hermit*. And in Dr. More's *Divine Dialogues on God's Providence* the historian Euistor tells an excellent good story of a certain Eremite and an angel of God, to which Parnell's tale bears yet more resemblance than Voltaire's to his. More, it may be necessary to remind the reader, died when Parnell was about ten years old.

In Shelley's lyrical drama of *Hellas*, modelled on the *Persæ* of Æschylus, but, according to the author's own confession, not worthy perhaps of the prize of the goat, in a conversation between Hassan and his sublime highness Mahmoud, the latter exclaims,

Kings are like stars; they rise and set, they have
The worship of the world, but no repose.

Here is offered to us an accidental illustration of a remark in Bacon's *Essay of Empire*. "Princes are like to heavenly bodies, which cause good or evil times; and which have much veneration, but no rest." The difference of the period in which these several writers lived is shown by

the idea in Bacon, that the stars are productive of good or evil to mankind, an idea of astrology, or, as it was once named astronomy, which was scarcely likely to occur to Shelley, seeing that faith in planetary influence was foreign both to his temper and his time.

Coincidences are, of course, not confined to our own country. Voltaire complains of too great a resemblance between some passages in Father Barre's *History of Germany* and his own *History of Charles XII.* So great was this resemblance that some people, forgetting that the same or similar ideas return to the human mind in the process of the suns, as the same or similar leaves and flowers to the revolving year, uncharitably accused the author of *Charles XII.*, which, says Voltaire, was written twenty years before the *History of Germany*, of plagiarism. But Cassaigne, whom Boileau fed with the milk of human kindness, as Pope fed Blackmore, might in his turn complain of the author of *La Henriade*, which commences with that well-known sublime effort of the imagination—

> Je chante ce héros qui régna sur la France,
> Et par droit de conquête et par droit de naissance.

These noble lines differ only from those of Cassaigne by the substitution of *naissance* for *chevance.*

Another example, among many, of a textual coincidence of expression between French writers is to be found in Delille's

> Que la nuit paraît longue à la douleur qui veille!

which an envious critic, notwithstanding the opening disagreement, might imagine taken from Saurin's tragedy of *Blanche et Guiscard* :—

> Qu'une nuit paraît longue à la douleur qui veille!

And another in Delille's famous line—

> Il ne voit que la nuit, n'entend que le silence—

which the same censor might suppose derived from *Théophile de Viau*—

> On n'oit que le silence, on ne voit rien que l'ombre.

After all, it is possible that Delille may have read the works of Saurin and De Viau.

Molière's best known scene in *Les Fourberies de Scapin* bears a remarkable resemblance to a scene in the *Pédant Joué*, a comedy of Cyrano de Bergerac, acted some twenty years before Molière's *Fourberies.* Géronte is old Granger, and Scapin Corbinelli. Where Géronte repeats his burden, *Que diable allait-il faire dans cette galère?* old Granger repeats his, *Que diable aller faire dans la galère d'un Turc?* The circumstances which lead to the expression are exactly the same.

A singular conformity of idea and expression is also observable between Charron and Montaigne. The latter, in his *Coustume de l'isle de Cea*, says :—

> La plus volontaire mort, c'est la plus belle. . . . Comme je n'offense les loix qui sont faites contre les larrons, quand j'emporte le mien et que je coupe ma bourse

. . . . aussi ne suis-je tenu aux lois faictes contre les meurtriers, pour m'avoir osté ma vie.

Charron, in the second chapter of his second book, about its being the fruit of wisdom to hold oneself always prepared for death, writes :—

La plus volontaire mort est la plus belle. Au reste, je n'offense pas les loix faites contre les larrons, quand j'emporte le mien et je coupe ma bourse. Aussi ne suis-je tenu aux loix faites contre les meurtriers, pour m'avoir osté la vie.

The sage theologian of Bordeaux is not, however, the only author who presents a striking resemblance to the philosopher of Périgord. Montaigne says :—

Ceste mesme piperie que les sens apportent à nostre entendement, ils la reçoivent à leur tour; . . . . ils mentent et se trompent à l'envy.

Pascal says :—

Les sens abusent la raison par de fausses apparences, et cette même piperie qu'ils lui apportent, ils la reçoivent d'elle à leur tour; . . . . ils mentent et se trompent à l'envi."

Lady Politic Would-be, in Ben Jonson's *Volpone*, speaking of the *Pastor Fido* of Guarini, says that all our English writers

> Will deign to steal out of this author mainly:
> Almost as much as from Montaignié.

There are indeed several curious coincidences in English as in French writers with Montaigne, to which this garrulous lady refers in her haste as thefts. But we hesitate to quote them, lest the reader complain, as the luckless Volpone complained of her ladyship, that he had taken a grasshopper by the wing—an expression for a chatterbox by the way which may be found in Archilochus, with the change, perhaps improvement, of tettix or cicada for grasshopper. Let then this article on coincidences conclude with an impropriation of the sacred words, attributed by Tom Moore to Sir Walter Scott, words which harmonise so well with those of Disraeli the Elder, which opened the subject to the reader in this magazine, and which are not more distinguished for their justice than for their good nature :—" To trace such coincidences is a favourite theme of laborious dulness, because they appear to reduce genius of the higher order to the usual standard of humanity, and of course to bring the author nearer to a level with his critics."

Colour in Painting.

One of our greatest art-critics is fond of telling us that there is no such thing as a vulgar colour, though there are many vulgar ways of arranging colours. Nobody ever objected to the most brilliant crimson, purple, or orange in a gladiolus, a tulip, or a calceolaria. Nobody ever found the hues of sunset gaudy, or thought the rainbow overdone. The iridescence that plays upon the facets of an opal, the inner surface of a pearly nautilus, or the dewy petal of a rose, never struck the most fastidious eye as glaring, in spite of all its changeful wealth of pink and green and violet. Even among human products we have each of us seen some specimens of Indian or Moorish workmanship, on which the brightest pigments known to man were lavished with an unsparing hand, and yet the total effect was not one of vulgarity, but rather of richness and splendour. Like the gorgeous tropical butterflies, they push colour to its furthest admissible extreme, without ever overstepping the limits of perfect good taste. Indeed, it is undeniable that every colour in itself, apart from special relations, is beautiful to the majority of human beings just in proportion as it is pure, intense, massive, and brilliant.

Nor do I think that we can doubt the superior æsthetic effect of reds, purples, and oranges over greens, blues, and violets, in the vast majority of cases. Not only do children and uncivilised men prize the pungent hues far more than the retiring ones; but in costume, in festal decoration, and in flower gardens, almost everybody confesses the same natural preference. It is true that many other considerations come in to mask this original tendency of our nature: fashion or a sense of propriety may make us dress in black or grey, rather than in scarlet or pink; the desire for relief may lead us to gaze with greater pleasure on the blue vault of heaven and the restful verdure of the meadows than on obtrusive masses of red and yellow; an educated revulsion from the excessive stimulation of vulgar furniture—with its crimson satin coverings, its wall-paper ablaze with rose-bunches, and its flare of gilt mirror-frames—may lead the artistic few to delight in the quiet repose of solid grey oak, neutral-tinted papers, and delicate shades of mellow green. Yet these exceptional instances cannot blind us to the general love for ruddy hues. Baby in its cradle jumps at a bunch of red rags. Dinah in the cane-field makes herself lovely with a red turban. The Central African chief is bribed with yards of red calico. Purple and fine linen are the proverbial adjuncts of ancient rulers, from Tyre to imperial Rome. In our own day, the soldier's red coat proves irresistible alike to the nurse-maid in the Park and to her mistress in the ball-room. Indeed, it is a

noticeable fact that men condemned to wear the sombre frock-coat of modern life are glad to seize on every opportunity for donning a brighter and more conspicuous garb. Regimental dances, masonic fêtes, Highland games, boating matches, athletic sports, and fancy balls are all eagerly caught at by our handsome, well-made young men as lucky occasions for the display of something finer than the swallow-tail and white tie of every-day gatherings. The subaltern in his uniform, the master of fox-hounds in his scarlet coat, and the champion sculler in his striped jersey are all representatives of the healthy primitive love for honest red and yellow.

But while we allow that bright colours are in themselves the pleasantest and prettiest of all—for indeed the retiring tints owe most of their beauty to the relief which they afford us from the excessive stimulation of brilliant hues—and while many of us are even beginning to perceive in England that an over-anxious fastidiousness on this point has long deprived us of much innocent pleasure in dress and decoration—I think it possible that almost all our painting (viewed as purely imitative in purpose) is still marked by far too much colour, and especially by far too much red, purple, orange, and yellow. I know that to offer any criticism from outside on our artistic public is to stir a nest of hornets, who straightway sally forth to sting the unhappy culprit with many technical phrases and great assumption of obvious superiority. But I must hasten to reassure these irritable gentlemen by stating that I do not propose to deal out any praise or blame in the present paper to any school or person whatsoever. When I speak of over-colouring, I only mean to assert the simple and positive fact that bright hues are to be found in greater proportions on the canvas of painters than in the average everyday scenes of external nature or human life. This preponderance of bright hues is due to the fact that our painting, though to a large extent imitative, has still in part a decorative purpose; and I believe, if we look at the matter from an historical point of view, we shall see reason to conclude that decorative and imitative art were originally one and the same; that in the course of ages they have been gradually separating their functions; but that a complete and final separation has not yet been entirely effected. Whether such a separation will eventually take place in the future is a question at which we can only guess with more or less of probability.

I cannot too strongly insist, however, upon the point that my contention is simply historical and not critical. I have no intention of asserting that our painting *ought* to be one thing rather than another, because I do not know any meaning for the word "ought" in æsthetic matters. I am not anxious to swell the ranks of those dogmatic æstheticians, already too numerous, who are perpetually thrusting upon the public their own likes and dislikes, as though they were eternal and immutable laws of objective nature. I wish only to point out a simple positive principle in the past and present development of art, which can

be easily verified by any person who takes the trouble to examine the evidence on his own account. At the same time, I must guard against an opposite misapprehension, into which my words might possibly lead an unwary reader. I have not a grain of sympathy with that modern French school who preach to us incessantly that "morality has no place in art." The insolent assumption that a particular trade or profession can set itself above those universal laws which govern all human actions and products would be ridiculous if it were not so dangerous. Right and wrong mean for the artist exactly what they mean for the rest of the world. A work of art which inspires high and noble and sympathetic sentiments is so far good, however poor may be its *technique*; while one which inspires low, vulgar, cruel, or anti-social emotions is so far bad, however exquisite may be its handicraft. The hideous apologies which Théophile Gautier poured forth in favour of bull-fighting and gladiatorial exhibitions;—the lurid beauty of Gérôme's masterpieces, "alternating between the sanguinary and the sensuous"—these are just as truly bad, in the ethical and only real sense of the word, as the literature and the art of Holywell Street. Even worse, indeed one may say, because their cruelty renders them far more revolting than their licentiousness. From the mere æsthetic standpoint these faults are to be avoided by the highest artist, because the man of refined temperament feels his taste as well as his conscience hurt by them, and the highest art is that which ministers to the most highly-organised natures. So my general statement that right and wrong have no meaning in art must be accepted in the most limited sense; that is to say, in the sense that no absolute *æsthetic* rule can be set up parallel to the absolute *ethical* rule which binds us all in every department of life.

Having thus secured ourselves against misconception on either hand, let us proceed to the historical investigation of our subject.

Painting apparently took its rise long before the discovery of pigments. Almost as soon as man was human, he seems to have employed his nascent faculties in etching rough delineations of his fellows with fragments of bone or chips of flint on any material at once hard enough and loose-textured enough to take a deep scratch. But there is no indication of colouring on these primæval bas-reliefs from the caves of Dordogne, which owe their whole artistic effectiveness to their rough accuracy of imitation. Amongst existing savages, however, colour is almost universally employed upon æsthetic products, though it is often obtained by more primitive devices than that of applied pigment. Sometimes red and yellow feathers are gummed together into a rude human face, whose eyes are supplied by pieces of mother-of-pearl, while the teeth are represented by little nacreous shells. In other cases, bits of coloured pebble or coral are pressed into the service of the artist to beautify the grotesque features of his staring and grinning god. Almost any natural object which exhibits bright permanent hues is prized by the savage on its own account, and is employed by some dexterous shift to enliven his

simple works of statuary. Just as he admires the glitter of gold and silver, the fitful gleam of the pearl, the pure tints of the ruby, the sapphire, and the emerald—just as he collects plumes from the ostrich, the parroquet, and the macaw, or gathers cowries, cones, and wentle-traps by the sea-shore—just as he treasures up scraps of red coral and glistening teeth of his conquered enemy—so he frankly uses these self-same materials to decorate the quaint idols which embody his highest ideal of imitative art. So long as the imitation is recognisable, he cares not for appropriateness in the tints he uses, only desiring to produce a brilliant and striking mass of colour which may dazzle and delight the eyes of his uncritical fellow-savage.

Wherever the use of pigments is known, we see analogous results. The North American Indians, who have two or three bright primary colours at command, employ them for decoration alone. Their baskets and bows are stained in alternate red and blue; and when they attempt figures or faces they colour them for mere brilliancy of effect, with very little regard to the chromatic proprieties of nature. In the ornamental articles which they manufacture by stitching birch-bark with threads of scraped porcupine quill there is some slight approach to imitative colouring; but even this does not go beyond such broad generalities as a blue flower, red fruit, and greenish-yellow leaves. There is no shading, no variety of tint, nothing but a suggestion of conventional colour applied indiscriminately to every object which can possibly be described as possessing it. For example, in this stage of art, a "red" cow would be painted in brilliant crimson, and a "blue" sea in the deepest indigo.

If we watch our own children at from four to nine years old, we shall find that they are still at the same point of artistic development. When they are given a paint-box, they set to work at once upon the nursery pictures, and adorn every little girl with a red frock, every boy with a green coat, and every man with a suit of staring yellow or massive blue. They do not care in the least whether the colours they apply resemble anything they have ever seen in real life: they want to *decorate* the pictures with the immediate and sensuously-efficient decoration of brilliant pigments. If they make any attempt at imitative colouring, it is in the same rude form as our Indian artist's: they put a patch of scarlet on the cheeks and lips, and they represent blue eyes by a blotch of ultramarine. As for the browns, the greys, the chocolates, the duller greens and yellows of their paint-box, they try them once, vote them "ugly colours," and never use them again.

The picture-books which are printed for their use frankly recognise these facts, and present them with brilliantly-dressed ladies and gentlemen, gorgeous flowers and monstrous butterflies, gilded palaces and magnificent furniture to their heart's content. The colours are mostly primary and unshaded; they are applied with no very scrupulous regard to external reality; and they meander somewhat vaguely on

either side of the line which ought to form their boundary. But the nursery critic overlooks these technical imperfections if only the hues are bright enough, deep enough, and laid on in big enough masses. "What a lovely book!" is the immediate and heart-felt exclamation, as a staring jumble of discordant pigments is laid open before the delighted eyes of the eager six-year-old recipient.

If we turn away from the savage and the child to our own early mediæval ancestors, we shall find very much the same conception of colour as merely decorative and ornamental. The Bayeux tapestry employs wool of every dye to define and mark off its various characters; but there is no attempt at representing the actual shades of life. If one horse is a bright red, his neighbour is a deep blue; if Harold is wrought in pink, William faces him in green. The sole purpose of the colouring is to gratify the eye and to distinguish clearly between adjacent objects. The outlines suggest the scene represented, and the needlework renders it in the most sensuously striking hues.

A little higher up in the scale comes the sort of art which we find in the Egyptian paintings. Here we get colour applied with a certain rough accuracy to persons, dresses, plants, and animals. The faces and naked limbs are something approaching Coptic flesh-colour; the clothes have a considerable *vraisemblance* of hue; the trees are green; the flowers red, white, and yellow; and the animals dappled or striped after nature. But there is little attempt at shading, while the pigments employed are still few in number and excessively bright in tone. Although colour is no longer used for *purely* decorative ends, but is suggested by the natural appearance of the object delineated, it yet subserves indirectly a decorative purpose, and is accordingly intensified far beyond the natural degree.

The early Italian style gives us another step in advance.* I refer, of course, merely to its employment of colour, for in other ways no comparison can be instituted between two such different schools as the Egyptian and the Mediæval. In its gilded backgrounds, its glittering halos, its serene blue skies, its pale green verdure, its purple, violet, and crimson robes, the early Italian school shows us still a strong love for purely decorative effects. After the lapse of so many years, the brilliant tints of Fra Angelico stand out with startling vividness on their panels even at the present day. But mixed with this mediæval love for gorgeous colouring, we see an increasing anxiety for truthful imitation. The shades of flesh are rendered with considerable skill, and many little

* I need hardly notice the fact that my arrangement is not meant to be in any sense chronological, but simply representative. We may find at the present day almost every stage of art co-existing in one country or another; and the fluctuations of æsthetic development have been so great that the mediæval school is really earlier in point of evolution than the classical school which preceded it. I have accordingly selected from all ages and countries certain typical stages which form an ideally continuous series, never actually exhibited in the history of any one national art.

touches show a distinct desire to subordinate the decorative to the intel lectual element. Nevertheless, on the whole, painting is still a mainly ornamental art in the hands of ecclesiastical decorators. Its principal use is for frescoes, church adornment, or monastic purposes; and it aims more at general brilliant effect in architectural composition than at separate intellectual gratification.

And now, I think, these examples will have made clear the distinction which I wish to draw between imitative and decorative art. Though the process of differentiation has been slow, and is yet incomplete, we can nevertheless see the goal towards which each has been progressing and the sources of pleasure on which it relies. Decorative art, as exhibited in its latest examples—such as the artistic cretonnes, the delicate wall-papers, and the beautiful encaustic tiles which the new æsthetic revival is making familiar to us all—depends for its effect almost entirely on immediate sensuous gratifications; though these are often of a comparatively high order. It gives us abundant visual stimulation by its pure and exquisite colours, harmoniously combined; by its pleasant alternations of light and shade; by its novel tints curiously sought out and effectively disposed. It yields us the highest pleasure of form in its graceful, flowing, and continuous curves; in its lissom sprays of straggling foliage, which nevertheless lead on the eyes unresistingly through their most natural muscular sweep; and in its symmetrical disposition of fruit, and flower, and animal form. But in its purest and most evolved types it never attempts directly to imitate nature. At most, it takes a hint from some natural object, which it *conventionalises*, as we say—that is, renders in symmetrical arrangement and artificial colouring. Its sole object is to give us the largest possible amount of sensuous pleasure, by means of colour—simple or combined; and of form —sinuous or symmetrical. If it imitates nature, it does so only incidentally, and it owes nothing to the accuracy of the imitation.

Imitative art, on the other hand, may incidentally afford us similar sensuous pleasures, but in its most developed types it has shown a tendency to rely more and more upon the exclusively intellectual and emotional factors of æsthetic feeling. It takes some object in external nature, and endeavours to represent it on a plane surface, in colour, in chiaroscuro, and in perspective. It tries to set the scene before our eyes as nearly as possible in its true lineaments, its actual relations, its total visible aspect. The whole growth of artistic *technique* has been the perfectioning of this process. From the single plane of the Egyptians and the floating background of the Chinese, art has advanced to the scientific perspective of the present European style. From the primary colours of the savage and the brilliant hues of the mediæval artists, it has arrived at the comparatively sombre delineations of modern landscape painters. In doing so, it has become from day to day less decorative and more imitative. It has, to a great extent, given up the attempt to please us by bright primaries, by gilding, by symmetrical

arrangement, by curves and wave-lines not to be found in nature. It has largely abandoned the purely sensuous gratifications—except so far as these may be really found in the objects which it copies; and it has learned to rely on the intellectual pleasure of skilful imitation, combined to a slight extent with plot-interest and sundry complex emotional feelings.*

Of course we must not suppose that civilised men are less impressible than others by the immediate sensuous pleasures of form and colour. On the contrary, they are far more impressible. Our latest modern fictile and textile products are calculated to yield the refined European a much higher pleasure than any which the savage can derive from his simple patches of red and blue paint. By combining, diversifying, and sustaining in due succession the various sense-pleasures, our æsthetic designers have learned how to afford a total of artistic gratification which no repetition of violent stimulants could equal or approach. But while in one direction we have perfected the æsthetic feeling which the savage seeks to arouse by his startling pigments, in another direction we have been endeavouring to perfect the extremely different æsthetic feeling which the savage seeks to arouse by his rude imitation of faces or animal shapes. And we have discovered on our way that the two pleasures, in their highest or most developed form, are practically incompatible. We have found out that we cannot, in one and the same artistic product, enjoy both the accurate delineation of nature, and also the stimulation of colours very much brighter and more pronounced than nature. The result has been that decorative and imitative art have necessarily diverged; and that the one has endeavoured to give us sensuous beauty, unconnected with imitation, while the other has aimed at truthful representation, with comparatively little regard for sensuous effect. The last qualifying phrase, however, marks the fact that the distinction between the two has not yet been fully carried out, if indeed it is ever destined to reach completion.

The reason why this distinction has arisen, and has reached its present advanced stage, is clear enough. In every generation the more critical and intelligent have progressively noticed the most striking diversities between the representation and the thing represented, thereby urging on to a closer imitation of nature. At first this impulse would only affect the very widest diversities. A red tree or a yellow sky would soon strike even the early spectator as too utterly incongruous; but an

* I must once more beg the reader to observe that I do not say decorative and imitative art *ought* to differ in these specified ways, but merely that their most developed forms *do*, as a matter of fact, differ in such ways. I must also ask him to understand that I use the words "higher" and "lower," as applied to art, with no ethical connotation, but simply as synonymous with "more" or "less developed;" the test of development being, as usual, the degree of differentiation from the primitive form. Right and wrong, in art as elsewhere, can only deal with that which is consonant with or repugnant to our *moral* nature.

ochre cow or a vermilion cheek would not appear to him absurd. Step by step, however, the drawing would become nearer to truth, and the colouring would approximate to nature, though much more slowly. Down to a very late time, after people have learned to expect correct drawing, they will still put up with very conspicuous and undeniable over-colouring. If we look at a few illustrations, taken up almost at the point where we left off before, we may see how slow is the differentiation between the two forms of art, and how long some tradition of their original unity lingers even in their most advanced stages.

The Japanese fan, which lies before me, hardly lays claim to the rank of an exclusively imitative work. To a great extent its purpose is frankly decorative. In the foreground we have a lady dressed in violet, red, and light blue, feeding a dappled russet fawn. The whole background consists below of a massive field of green, covering by far the largest area in the entire fan. Above, the sky is represented of a clear red, shading off toward the horizon into white, lavender, and violet. A pink-blossomed tree overhangs it to the left, while a red scroll and a few violet figures break the monotonous verdure on the right. As a whole, this composition pleases even a European eye by its careful assortment of harmonies and its agreeable correspondence with the natural chromatic scale. Its inaccuracies of delineation too, though perceived, are forgiven, because we set them down at once as Japanese: we class the object in its proper place as a typical specimen of a partially developed national art. There is a certain quaintness in its very imperfections which in a way attracts us; but the attraction is rather ethnographical and scientific than æsthetic. We like such an object to decorate our mantelpiece or our whatnot, but we do not exhibit it in our galleries. Though its truthfulness of delineation is far above anything which the savage could appreciate, yet when judged by our developed standard of taste, it is seen to have sacrificed too much to mere sensuous stimulation for admission into the strictly imitative class.

A large portion of modern keramic ware—excepting only the latest and most differentiated specimens—shows us a similar attempt to unite the two modes of æsthetic pleasure. A Sèvres vase has often a background of pure colour, on which is inserted a medallion of white porcelain containing some sort of picture—a bunch of roses, a group of Watteau shepherdesses, or a landscape scene with figures interspersed. The object of the whole vase is decorative, and though the central picture has more or less imitative pretensions, it shares the same purpose as the remainder; a fact which is clearly shown by its bright colours and its intensification of the natural hues which it imitates. Similarly with Dresden statuettes and other quasi-imitative developments of plastic art in its inferior walks. All of them mix up some desire to gratify by brilliant colouring with the original design of imitative effect.

As we pass on to more directly representative art we see the prevalence of decorative colouring almost as conspicuously as before. If we

begin at the lowest end of the social scale, we find in the cheap German prints which adorn the walls of our peasantry a profusion of reds, purples, blues, and greens, evidently laid on with the principal intention of impressing the eye by a mass of pleasant tints, in the same manner as that employed by the old Egyptian artist. The labourer who buys such a picture wishes to see in it so much likeness to nature as will enable him to recognise its subject, besides finding an appeal to some simple emotion which comes home to his heart in its better or worse moods—baby crowing at the door in its mother's arms, or the huntsman holding up the baffled fox to its snarling and baying blood-enemies; but beyond this, he also demands that his picture shall have abundance of good bright colouring, so as to decorate his whitewashed wall and gratify his native love for pungent visual stimulation. A step above this, we find in the chromo-lithographs of the middle classes one perpetual blaze of golden sunset hues, Italian lakes as blue as gentian, mountain tops tinged with more than Oriental ruddiness, Alpine valleys over which a whole paint-box seems to have got loose indiscriminately, cataracts crowned by crystallised rainbows, and backed up with a solidified firmament of ultramarine. Of course the drawing here is immensely truer than in the German print, while the colours are immensely toned down and shaded off into one another; but the decorative purpose of the pigments is still undeniably conspicuous. Vermilion, carmine, lake, and orange wander at will over sea and sky and mountain. The intention of the lithographer is to strike a compromise: he wishes to keep as true to nature as he can in drawing and shading, but to give the largest consistent amount of colouring which can be combined with approximate accuracy. His products are partly imitative pictures, but they are also partly decorative furniture.

And dare we go on to touch the very ark of art, the water-colours and oil-paintings which hang upon the walls of our academies and exhibitions themselves? It is adventurous to do so; but we must remember that this is a question of positive fact rather than one of taste or of artistic *technique*. The point to be settled is simply this—Do our artists purposely select the brightest-coloured subjects, and exhibit them in somewhat intensified tints; and do they do so with a directly decorative intention? I think the question only admits of one answer. We cannot look about us in any art-gallery without noticing the constant choice of brilliant hues and the careful selection of scenes which will admit of their introduction. I am not criticising this fact; I am simply stating it. Artists doubtless do quite right in representing the scenes which most gratify both themselves and their public: they only begin to do wrong when they try to convince us that their sole object is imitative. At the present stage of art, it cannot be denied that great pains are taken to introduce as much brilliant pigment as possible, without shocking the average sense of imitative propriety current in most of our educated classes. There are two ways in which this object is attained—first, by

the choice of bright subjects, or the brightest aspect of subjects; secondly, by the gratuitous introduction of colours, not found or only slightly hinted at in the object represented. I shall give a few examples of each.

In landscape, the decorative intention is shown in the constant selection of sunsets, bright skies, hazy atmospheric effects, red and purple tinged clouds, yellow mists, haloes round sun or moon, and other transient phases of light, in preference to the ordinary clear or dull daylight. It is equally conspicuous in the autumnal tints, the masses of purple heather, the blueness of the distant hills, the belted green and violet of the sea, the red and white cliffs which stand out massively in the foreground. We notice it again in the preponderance of Italian, Oriental, or tropical scenes, where brighter colours are admitted with greater readiness by the general public.* We very seldom find a piece of plain green and brown scenery, with a dull bluish sky, on the canvas of a painter; but we know by heart the Lake of Como, the Bay of Naples, the Evening in Seville, the Street in Cairo, and the Sunset on Loch Lomond. Few and far between are the grey mountains, the brown gorse, the sombre stream running between dark rocks, the lake which does not mirror on its placid bosom the gay hues of eventide. Of course one finds these sometimes; but not nearly so often as the brighter subjects. Even then, they are generally represented under the influence of a thunderstorm, a mist, an early morning, or an *effect* of some kind. Now this love for effects is an offspring of the decorative element in art. An effect is an opportunity for more colour, for unusual colour, for refractive tints of red, yellow, purple, and orange, which do not often crop out in the dispersed light of the noonday sun. Such colours are the most exceptionally bright of any which we ever see in nature, and so they are introduced with a decorative intention in art. Our public—or rather its most cultivated class—has outgrown the stage where it will accept of brilliant hues which have not even a suggestion in the original to justify them; but it seeks for the greatest masses of warm tints which it can ever find in reality, and it demands that they should be transferred to canvas with just a trifle of artistic exaggeration. Why do we so seldom see Lugano at two o'clock of a winter's afternoon, or catch a glimpse of Snowdon on an average British sunshiny morning? Simply because the artist and the public both, not unnaturally, desire to seize them at their brightest and photograph their most adventitious tints in somewhat intensified pigments.

Figure painting shows us an exactly analogous choice of subjects.

* As a matter of fact, I have learned from my own observation and the information of all trustworthy persons, that colour is, on the whole, just as common in temperate North European countries as in Mediterranean or tropical climates; but the public generally is still a prey to the delusion of Italian skies and tropical flowers, so that it readily overlooks an amount of colouring on such subjects which it would regard as excessive in a simple French or English landscape.

Our painters ransack the earth for "effective" drapery; for matting, carpets, cloaks, and upholstery; for "local colouring" of a brilliant sort. Moorish and Persian robes, early Italian dresses, Louis Quatorze costumes, Spanish mantillas and jackets, loose Nubian gowns and necklets of coin, Hindoo veils and bangles, adorn half the pieces in the *Salon*. Silk, velvet, slashed doublets, Elizabethan stomachers, bright-coloured hose, scarlet uniforms, South German petticoats, princes in stars, saints in Oriental purple, gipsies in red rags, and cardinals in full canonicals, jostle one another in their gilt frames. Every chance of a brilliant dress is seized with avidity, and the wardrobe of all ages and countries is put under contribution by the modern studios. A painter in search of a subject shows his decorative intention by hunting up a theme which will afford ample opportunities for the use of sensuously efficient pigments.

So much for our first point, the decorative nature of the subjects chosen for imitation. Let us look next at our second point, the introduction, for decorative purposes, of bright colour not found in the original.

Lionardo said that a perfect picture should exactly resemble the reflection of its original in a mirror. That is to say, Lionardo wished pictorial art to be purely imitative: or, at least, he said so; for there is sometimes a great difference between artistic profession and artistic practice. Our modern painters often give much the same account of their principles; but every plain uncritical person knows that they introduce a great deal more colour into their imitation than they ever found in nature. I don't blame them for doing so; on the contrary, I see that the public probably wouldn't look at their pictures if it was otherwise, and I praise them accordingly. But I insist strenuously on the positive fact that painters *do* introduce colour for decorative effect. I have often stood and watched an artist in the very act of reddening a grey rock. If he is an unusually honest one, he will frankly admit that he does so because that point in his picture requires "warming up;" in other words, wants decorative additions. But he generally endeavours to convince us, on the strength of his abstract imitative theory, that the red tint is there, in spite of the evidence of our own eyes to the contrary. Of course it is just possible that artists may see colours very much more vividly than ordinary people: but that will not account for the discrepancy which ordinary people notice between the original and the copy. If we can't see a faint patch of red in the rock, why should we see it so plainly in the pigment? There is no way out of it. It must be intensified. I acquit the artist of deliberate falsification, but I cannot acquit him of perverse and perverted judgment in refusing to recognise his decorative wishes. Every faint hint of colour is exaggerated into undue prominence. Every passing ray of sunlight is made to reveal a bit of bright lichen or faded russet leaf, which is usually merged in the dull brown of ordinary shadow. All the hills are glowing with purple and blue and ruddy pink, where nature generally shows them of a misty pearl-grey. If these devices will not suffice to "warm up" the picture, our artist

throws in a bit of extraneous colouring—an old woman in a red cloak, a cow with a rich and glossy brown coat, or a couple of ruddled sheep, in strong contrast to the pale green of the surrounding meadow. Brightness of hue and harmony of colouring are still sought after for their own sake by all our painters, in spite of their constant assertion that their sole endeavour is the imitation of nature.

I cannot too often repeat that I find no fault with all this. Taste in art is simply relative to the likes and dislikes of the individual, depending ultimately upon his nervous organisation; and I hope to show further on that the present development of our art is the natural and inevitable result of our existing position in time and place. It is absurd to say that artists ought to imitate nature, just as it is absurd to say that a Japanese fan ought to be more correctly drawn. Our painters aim at a mixed effect, partly intellectual through their skill in imitation, partly sensuous through their apt disposition of lines and colours. The one pleasure is just as legitimate as the other; and the only mistake that can be made is the positive one of denying the actual presence of decorative elements in existing pictorial art.

I will put a crucial instance, however, as artists—not quite recognising their partially decorative intention—are rather slow to acknowledge that nature does not really contain all the colour which they throw into it. If we wish to choose a summer resort for our holiday, where shall we go to see what it is really like? The very worst representation we can get (because the most incorrect) will be one of those flaring picture-advertisements which we find upon the walls of railway stations. Its object is all but simply decorative: it lavishes the brightest pigments in the most impossible situations; it gives us absolutely snowy chalk cliffs, inexpressibly purple sea, and wonderfully pea-green meadows. Except that it does not probably falsify the main natural features in their general outline quite beyond recognition, it is useless for purposes of practical information. Next in order of unlikeness to nature comes the quasi-artistic chromolithograph. This gives us a few more intermediate colours, and a little better drawing; but it still sheds a wealth of primary tints over the scene which no human eye ever met in its waking hours. We feel at once that this, too, is quite untrustworthy as a guide to the reality. We turn to a water-colour or an oil-painting, and we find to some extent in the latter and much more in the former that colour is still bestowed with a generosity far exceeding the niggardly measure of nature. We really can't say whether the place itself will be pretty or not. We see a very beautiful and artistic representation, in correct drawing and perfect perspective, with a glow of colour that affords immediate gratification to the eye; but we feel that it is an idealisation, not a copy. Again, we take up the local guide-book, and when we find a woodcut or engraving giving us a view of the neighbourhood, we are conscious that we tread at once on firmer ground. Of course the details have been exaggerated and the beauties artificially

heightened, but the misleading element of colour is wanting, and we know that the lines of contour cannot very widely diverge from the reality. Last of all, we get a photograph, "limned by the unerring sun," and we know with certainty what manner of place we have to deal with. Though the colours of nature are omitted, we yet find it far easier to read them into the outline before us from our general experience than to read out the idealised tints from the picture of the artist. If the photograph is not absolutely truthful, it is at any rate through no intention of falsifying or flattering that it goes astray. The sun never tries to make a pretty picture.

"So a photograph, then, is your highest ideal of imitative art!" says the critic, with that serene sneer of sarcastic inquiry for which he is so distinguished. By no means, because it is not art at all. It is merely the perfection of mechanical imitative representation, with the true element of colour omitted. But it serves to bring out the decorative nature of our existing art in a very simple and conspicuous manner. Our pictures are not coloured photographs, and we don't wish them to be so.

There is another criticism, however, which many people will be eager to bring forward. The admirers of the early water-colour painters and their allies will say—"But you do not find these strong colours in Crome, in Girtin, in the early Turners, in David Cox." True perhaps:—it is hard to say, since one must make great allowances for fading. But in any case, the example of one or two isolated names is not sufficient. All that I mean to assert is this—that nearly every existing development of art unites more or less the imitative and the decorative elements. In one instance you may find a greater preponderance of the one, and in a second instance of the other; but taking our art all round, you will find everywhere a decorative purpose still distinctly recognisable. Having arrived at this conclusion with such unanimity as may be attainable, let us go on to inquire into its origin and probable future.

There are two ways of reasoning upon æsthetic matters, by the objective and by the subjective method. The first proceeds by watching the average likes and dislikes of men generally, or of a particular nation, age, or clique, and then endeavouring to account for them on general or special psychological grounds. The second proceeds by watching your own personal likes and dislikes, accounting for them transcendentally to your own satisfaction, and then dogmatically asserting their absolute truth and moral superiority to everybody else's taste. In spite of the example afforded by many distinguished critics, I prefer to follow the former method of inquiry.

If we glance rapidly at the development of art in all times and places, we shall see that it has everywhere largely depended upon the prior stages already attained. There has never been a sudden leap from one style to another. The taste of each generation has been formed upon the artistic products of those which preceded it; and no single

individual has ever departed very widely from the general practice of his predecessors. An Assyrian never sat down before a living model to study chiaroscuro, nor did a Chinaman ever take his easel afield to construct a system of natural perspective. The taste of each was on the whole sufficiently gratified, and his critical scruples sufficiently met, by the average workmanship of his countrymen and contemporaries. No Zeuxis ever arose at Memphis; no Raffaelle ever sprang up suddenly amid the conventional artists of Byzantium. Cimabue led on to Giotto, and Giotto to the great painters of the Renaissance: but each change was introduced by slow and tentative degrees, or it could never have been introduced at all. The North American Indians who ask what has become of the other half in a profile, the negroes who object that a man in the foreground is bigger than a house at a hundred yards' distance, would not appreciate the sudden introduction of pictures representing every object in its real visible relations of position and magnitude. A mediæval critic would find our modern paintings dull and sombre; he would miss the brilliant tints and abundant gilding of his own school. A gamekeeper prefers the German print to the exquisite landscapes in the gallery of the castle.

Accordingly, the explanation of our existing stage in art-development is to be found in the circumstances of our place in the world's history. A differentiation has been going on for ages in a comparatively steady direction, and at a moderately even rate, though subject of course to those minor fluctuations which inevitably arise everywhere from the unequal incidence of surrounding energies. The point which we have now reached in this differentiation is just one step ahead of that which we occupied yesterday, and just one step behind that which we shall occupy to-morrow. There may be a little reaction here, a somewhat accelerated rate of progress there; but, on the whole, the art of every nation and epoch exactly answers to the general sociological development of that race and period.

And what are the factors of our own position at the present day? We are the inheritors of all the knowledge and skill of Egypt, Assyria, Greece, Italy, the Renaissance, the modern world. We are not, as we hope and believe, at a period of decline and retrogression. We are going forward on the same general lines of progress as those which have raised us to our present height. But we are not suddenly and unaccountably transcending all prior experience and all earlier methods. Our science is built on the foundations of Galileo, and Newton, and Boyle, and Cuvier; our intellects are nourished on the thoughts of Plato, and Cicero, and Pascal, and Kant; our ethics are based upon the long traditions of Christianity and the slowly-improving experience of past generations. So, too, our art-constructiveness and our art-criticism are the results of a long line of previous developments. The tastes and opinions of our artists and our artistic public upon æsthetic matters are largely formed upon the models of past years; though they also diverge

from those models just so far as is necessary for the continuous stream of æsthetic evolution. The work of each generation is based on the teaching of the last, which it usually slightly improves, and hands on the improvement to its successors.

Now our modern art is derived, through the Renaissance, from the mediæval and classical schools. Ever since the early Italian revival, there has been, on the whole, a constant tendency for art to become more and more imitative, less and less decorative. Whatever may have been the practice of painters, they have always set forth as their theoretical principle the direct imitation of nature. The intellectual pleasure of accurate representation has gained ground daily over the sensuous pleasure of direct chromatic stimulation. But the tradition of the older schools has not yet wholly died away, nor is the artistic public prepared to let it die away. The critical principle that art *ought* to be more beautiful than nature is still tacitly held, though not always openly expressed, by most of our painters and critics. In other words, art of such a sort is more pleasing to them than any other. The habits of their teachers and fellows, combined with the natural love for bright hues, make them prefer pictures with just so much extra colouring as we ordinarily see. More than this would offend their critical and intellectual tastes, because they have learned from their predecessors to expect a close adherence to the probabilities of nature: less than this they would regard as sombre and gloomy, because they still demand decorative effect, under the names of *warmth* and *harmony*.

Indeed, the whole controversy of realism and idealism in art is to a great extent a difference of opinion as to the imitative or decorative intention of painting. The idealists are those who would to some extent subordinate the former to the latter. The realists are those who prefer the intellectual to the sensuous and emotional element. Of course other considerations also intervene; but on the whole, the idealist is the champion of combined sense-pleasure and accurate delineation, while the realist is the champion of pure imitative skill. The one is just as right as the other, because each knows what pleases himself; and in art, whose sole province is that of pleasing us, there cannot possibly be any other test of right than each man's individual taste.

The general conclusion at which we have arrived is therefore this. In our present art there is very little pure imitative work which is not more or less mixed up with decorative additions. For many ages these two styles of art have been differentiating; but they have not even now become absolutely distinct. Decoration still borrows the forms of flowers, foliage, and human features, though it conceals their lineaments by conventional treatment. Imitative art still employs colour for decorative purposes, though it endeavours to use it as closely as possible after the fashion of nature herself in her warmer moods. Both the artist and the public demand this union, though they will not always confess it; and they would not be satisfied with a rigorously realistic representation of

the exact colours found in the dullest natural scenes. We insist upon this particular amount of decorative intermixture and no other, because more colouring would shock our intellectual perception of similarity, while less would disappoint our expectation of sensuous stimulation.

Will the differentiation which has reached this point ever attain a higher stage? Will the imitative element ever be banished from ornament, and the decorative element from painting? This is a difficult and a prophetic question upon which a great deal may be said from either side.

On the one hand it may be urged that the progress in either direction has been steady and regular during a vast period of past development; and it may seem unlikely that so uniform a movement should cease just at its present point. Under our very eyes we see a considerable step in the same path being taken both by ornament and by painting. Pottery and textile fabrics are beginning to discard the bunches of flowers, the landscapes, the figure pieces of former industrial art. Decorators are preaching loudly that "good taste" demands of all products not absolutely imitative that they should be entirely decorative. In needlework, where nature cannot be represented with accuracy, the rulers of our artistic world are fast gravitating towards conventional patterns and artificial harmonies of tint: the shaded mosaic work of tiny square patches which used to cover so many yards of canvas is giving way to crewel-stitch and uniform colouring. In keramic art, the rich hues and beading of Renaissance pottery are displacing the floral ornamentation and landscape scenes of the last half-century. In house furniture, a distinguished knot of artistic designers have introduced wall-papers and cretonnes on which diapered patterns, exquisite twining tracery, and powerful yet delicately-blended colours are substituted for the scattered pictures which covered our walls and our sofas until yesterday. The public is beginning to draw a hard and fast line on this side between imitation and decoration, and to expect that wherever ornament is borrowed from natural forms it shall be so conventionalised and adapted as to show at once its decorative intention. Instead of real flowers and leaves in brilliant bunches on a white background, our æsthetic purveyors now tickle our eyes with continuous patterns of richly-toned foliage, blossom, and fruit, rendered in symmetrical order and graceful curves, on a ground of some relieving and restful neutral tint. In short, the present tendency of decorative art is to become more distinct than ever from imitative painting.*

Nor can I doubt that, on the whole, of late years, imitative art has

* Let me again warn the reader against the notion that any objective goodness or badness is asserted concerning this movement. It is a fashion which pleases me personally, and which, like many others, I am glad to follow; but it is none the less a fashion, not a principle or expression of objective truth. All art is good or bad relatively to the individual alone. To ask another man to conform to one's own standard of taste is in effect asking him to get himself a new nervous system.

simultaneously been growing less decorative and confining itself more strictly to the rigorous copying of nature. Individual instances there may be to the contrary; but most visitors to our exhibitions will probably agree that a more sober and immediately imitative style of colouring has been gradually growing both in the practice of painters and the estimation of connoisseurs. The movement towards differentiation is apparently affecting painting in the same way as it affects ornament, though doubtless to a less degree.

On the other hand, many plausible arguments may be brought against the probability of an ultimate and complete differentiation, at least within any reasonable forecast of future time. It may be said that while developed ornamental art has rejected, or is now rejecting, all direct imitation, it has always retained some likeness to animal and floral forms, however much disguised by conventional adaptations. There does not seem to be any reason why it should not continue in future to base itself upon these natural shapes, even if it take hitherto unexampled pains in asserting their purely suggestive character. So too, in the case of painting, it may be reasonably affirmed that the sensuous love for brilliant colour is a more primordial and deeply-seated element of our æsthetic nature than the intellectual love for accurate imitation. It may easily happen, therefore, that even when the pleasure of direct chromatic stimulation has been minimised in imitative art, there will still remain a remnant to bear witness for ever to its originally decorative nature. It seems hard to believe that painters will ever cease from choosing for their themes the most exceptionally brilliant scenes of the external world. It would appear natural enough to suppose that we should always most represent what pleases us most in its presentative form.

Perhaps an intermediate course will be the one actually taken in the future development of art. A more exacting and critical eye in coming generations may demand a stricter adherence to the colouring of nature in landscape and portrait, while it may retain somewhat of the older brilliancy in purely ideal pieces. There is little likelihood of any ascetic rejection of colour on its own account. But when the rising æsthetic school have reformed our houses in accordance with their own taste, it may perhaps happen that the public will find colour enough in its decorative appliances, and only demand the intellectual pleasure of accurate imitation in its pictorial art. There will perhaps be sensuous stimulation sufficient for every eye in the encaustic tiles, the wooden parquets, the oaken wainscoting, the rich carpets, the deeply-tinted dados, the light and brilliant wall-papers, the delicate table-covers, the chintzes, curtains, cushions, banner-screens, and antimacassars; and it may become a pleasant relief to rest the vision and fix the attention upon a landscape or a figure-painting in gentle and natural colours. Pictures might then cease to do double duty as art-products and decorative furniture. Landscape might become greyer and more truthful; historical paintings might

grow less theatrical and more realistic; while general figure subjects might be chosen with less reference to costume and colouring than is at present the case.

However this may be, it is important to remember that art in every stage is exactly adapted to its public and its professors. The stage which we have actually reached is at each moment the one which we are best able to appreciate. In art, whatever is is right; because to be right is merely to please one's public. I trust, therefore, that no reader will misunderstand my meaning and suppose that I would blame artists for the decorative colouring which I cannot help seeing in their work. I merely point out *that* it is there, and *why* it is there. Further than this no philosophic critic can go. To say that it is right or wrong is merely to say that the critic himself admires or dislikes it; a purely personal point which can very seldom be of any general interest to the outside world. Given an object and its representation, any man can decide upon the positive question whether or not, and how much, the copy reproduces the original. But no man can decide dogmatically just how much resemblance and how much decorative deviation other people ought to admire. It is the business of the critic to point out beauties or failures as he conceives them: it is the province of the psychological æsthetician to account for the average likes and dislikes of others as he finds them.

G. A.

"For Percival."

CHAPTER XLVI.

The Result of Percival's Economy.

JUDITH'S letter lay on the table still. Bertie had not come to claim it, and she had not come home.

Having ascertained these facts, Percival went to his own room, and finding his tea set ready for him, he ate and drank hurriedly, hesitating whether he should go and meet her. Standing by the window, he looked out on the darkening street. All vulgarity of detail was lost in the softening dusk, and there was something almost picturesque in the opposite roof, whose outline was delicately drawn on the pale blue sky. Everything was refined, subdued, and shadowy in the tender light; but Percival, gazing, saw no charm in the little twilight picture. Sorrow may be soothed by quiet loveliness, but perplexities absorb all our faculties, and we do not heed the beauty of the world, which is simple and unperplexed. If it is forced upon our notice, the contrast irritates us; it is almost an impertinence. Percival would have been angry had he been called upon to feel the poetry which Bertie had found, only a few days before, in the bit of houseleek growing on that arid waste of tiles. It is true that, in that dim light, the houseleek was only a dusky little knob.

Should he go and meet Judith? Should he wait for her? What would she do? Should he go to St. Sylvester's? By the time he could reach the Church the choristers would have assembled—would the organist be there? While he doubted what to do, his fingers were in his waistcoat pocket, and he incidentally discovered that he had only a shilling and a threepenny piece in it. He went quickly to the table and struck a light. Since he had enrolled himself as Judith Lisle's true

"IT IS I," HE SAID; "THANK YOU FOR SENDING FOR ME."

knight, ready to go anywhere or render her any service in her need, it would be as well to be better provided with the sinews of war. He unlocked the little writing-case which stood on a side table.

Percival's carefulness in money matters had helped him very much in his poverty. It seemed the most natural thing in the world to him, that, since his income was fixed, his expenditure must be made to fit it. He hardly understood the difficulties of that numerous class, of which Bertie was an example, men who consider certain items of expenditure as fixed and unchangeable, let their income be what it may. But Percival had retained one remembrance of his wealthier days, a familiarity with money. People who have been stinted all their lives, are accustomed to handle silver and copper, but are anxious about gold, and frightened at notes or cheques. Percival, though he was quite conscious of the relative greatness of small sums to his narrow means, retained the old habit of thinking them small, and never bestowed an anxious thought on the little hoard in his desk. As he went to it that evening he remembered, with sudden pleasure, that there was the money that had been accumulating for some time, in readiness for Mrs. Bryant's return. He could borrow from that if need were.

The money was gone.

Percival stood up, and stared vaguely round the room. Then, unable to believe in his misfortune, he emptied out the contents of the desk upon the table, and tossed them over in a hurried search. A carelessly folded paper caught his eye, as something unfamiliar. He opened it and read:—

"DEAR THORNE,

"You were good enough to let me borrow of you once, when I was in a scrape. I am in a worse difficulty now, and, as I have not the chance of asking your leave, I've ventured to help myself. You shall have it back again in a few days, with an explanation of this cool proceeding.

"H. L."

Percival threw the letter down, and walked to the window again. It was clear enough now. Bertie had had no need to borrow eight or nine pounds, if he were only going out for the day to enquire about a situation as organist. But if a man is running off with a young lady, it will not do to have an absolutely empty purse. Even though she may be an heiress, he cannot very well begin by asking her to pay his railway fare. "It would define the relative positions a little *too* clearly," thought Percival, with a scornful smile.

"Will she hope still?" was his next thought. "It is not utterly impossible, I suppose, that Master Bertie has bolted alone. One couldn't swear he hadn't. Bolted he certainly has, but if she *will* hope, I can't say that I know he has gone with Miss Nash. Though I am sure he

has—how else would he undertake to repay me in a few days? Unless that is only a figure of speech."

He suddenly remembered the time when Bertie left his debt unpaid, after a similar promise, and he went back to his desk with a new anxiety. His talisman, the half-sovereign which was to have been treasured to his dying day, had shared the fate of the common-place coins which were destined for Mrs. Bryant and his bootmaker. It was a cruel blow, but Percival saw the absurd side of his misfortune, and laughed aloud in spite of himself.

"My sentiment hasn't prospered. It might just as well have been a threepenny-piece! Ah, well! it would be unreasonable to complain," he reflected, "since Bertie has promised to send my *souvenir* back again. Very thoughtful of him! It will be a little remembrance of Emmeline Nash, when it comes, and not of Judith Lisle; that will be the only difference. Quite unimportant, of course. Upon my word, Lisle went about it in a systematic fashion. Pity he gave his attention to music; a distinguished burglar was lost to society when he turned organist." He took up the paper and glanced at it again. "If I show this to her, she will pay his debt, as she did last time—and that she never shall do!" He doubled it up, and thrust it in with the rest.

A shuffling step in the passage, a knock at the door, and Emma made her appearance. "Miss Lisle has come in, sir."

Percival looked up a little astonished, but he only thanked her in his quiet voice, and closed his desk. He turned the key, and waited a moment till Emma should have gone, before he obeyed the summons. When, answering Judith's "Come in," he entered the Lisles' room, he found her standing by the window. She turned and looked at him, as if she were not quite certain whom to expect.

"It is I," he said. "Thank you for sending for me."

"Sending for you? I didn't send. But I am glad you came," she added.

She had not sent for him, and Percival remembered that he had passed Lydia Bryant on his way. The message, which after all was a mere statement of a fact, was hers. He coloured angrily, and stood confused.

"You did not send? No—I see. I beg your pardon—I misunderstood——"

"It makes no difference," said Judith, quickly. "Don't go. I wanted to tell you——"

She paused. "I have not been unjust, Mr. Thorne. Mr. Nash has been at Standon Square this afternoon. After he had my telegram, he received a letter from Emmeline, and it was as I thought. She is with Bertie."

"With Bertie? And he came here?"

"Yes; to see if it was as Emmeline said, that they were married at St. Andrew's, last Tuesday."

Percival looked blankly at her. "Married! It isn't possible, is it?"

"Quite possible," said Judith, bitterly. "Standon Square is in St. Andrew's parish, as well as Bellevue Street. It seems that Bertie had only to have the banns mumbled over for three Sundays, by an old clergyman whom nobody hears, in a church where nobody goes. It sounds very easy, doesn't it?"

Percival stood for a moment speechless, while the cool audacity of Bertie's proceeding filtered slowly into his mind. "But if any one had gone to St. Andrew's?" he said at last.

"That would have ended it, of course. I suppose he would have run away without Emmeline. If I had gone that Sunday, when I had arranged to go, for instance. Yes, that would have been very awkward, wouldn't it, Mr. Thorne? Only you see Bertie happened to be ill that morning, and I couldn't leave him. You remember, you were good enough to go to church with us."

"I remember," said Percival, with a scornful smile, as he recalled the devoted attention with which he had escorted the young organist to St. Sylvester's.

"He must have enjoyed that walk, I should think," said Judith, still very quietly. Her unopened note was on the table, where she had placed it that morning. She took it up, and tore it into a hundred pieces.

"You have heard people talk of broken hearts, haven't you?" she said.

"Often," he answered.

"Well then, Bertie has broken Miss Crawford's. She said this morning that she should never hold up her head again if this were true, and I believe she never will."

"Do you mean she will die of it?" said Thorne, aghast.

"Not directly, perhaps; but I am sure she will die the sooner for it. All her pride in her life's work is gone. She feels that she is disgraced. I could not bear to see her this afternoon, utterly ashamed and humble before that man."

"What did he say?"

"Some things I won't tell you." A quick blush dyed her face. "Naturally he was angry, he had good reason to be. And when he told her she was past her work, she moaned, poor thing, while the tears rained down her cheeks, and only said 'God forgive me—yes.'"

Percival could but echo her pity. "Bertie never thought——" he began.

"Never thought! When our trouble came," said Judith, "we had plenty of friends better able to do something for us, but, somehow, they didn't. And when there was the talk of Bertie's coming here, and I remembered her, and asked her if she could help me to a situation anywhere in the neighbourhood, she wrote to me to come to her at once, and she would do all she could to help Bertie too. I have her letter still. She said she longed to know me for my mother's sake, and was sure she should soon love me for my own. And this afternoon she prayed God she might never see my face again!"

"She thinks you are to blame, then?" said Thorne.

"Yes; and am I not?" was the quick reply. "Ought I not to have known Bertie better? And I did know him. That is the worst of it. I did not expect this, and yet I ought to have been on my guard. He has been my one study from first to last. From the time that he was a little boy—the bonniest little boy that ever was!—my life has been all Bertie. I remember him, with long curls hanging down his back, and his grey eyes opened wide, when he stood on tiptoe at the piano, and touched the little tunes that he had heard, and looked over his shoulder at me, and laughed for pleasure in his music. I can see his little baby fingers—the little soft fingers I used to kiss—on the keys now. Oh, Bertie! why didn't you die then?"

She stopped, as if checked by a sudden thought, and looked so quickly up at Percival, that she caught an answer in his eyes that he would never have uttered.

"Ah, yes, he would have been the same," she said. "He *was* the same then; I know it. They used to praise me, when I was a child, for giving everything up to Bertie, as if he were not my happiness. And it has been so always. And now I have sacrificed Miss Crawford to Bertie—my dear old friend—my mother's friend—who is worth ten times as much as Bertie ever was, or ever will be! Is not this a fine ending of all?"

Percival broke the silence after a moment's pause. "*Is* it an ending of all?" he said. "Bertie has been very wrong, but it has been partly thoughtlessness. He is very young, and if he should do well hereafter, may there not even yet be a future to which you may look forward? As for the world, it is not disposed to look on a runaway match of this sort as a crime."

She turned her eyes full upon him, and he stopped.

"Oh, the world!" she said. "The world will consider it a sort of young Lochinvar affair, no doubt. But how much of the young Lochinvar do you think there is about Bertie, Mr. Thorne? You have heard him speak of Emmeline Nash sometimes—not as often nor as freely as he has spoken to me—still, you have heard him. And judging from that, do you believe he is in love with her?"

"Well—no," said Thorne, reluctantly. "Hardly that."

"A thousand times No! If by any possibility he had loved her, foolishly, madly, with a passion that blinded him to the cruel wrong he was doing, it would all have been different. I should have blamed him, but in spite of Miss Crawford I should have forgiven him; I should have had hope, he would have been my Bertie still; I should not have despised him. But this is cold, and base, and horrible—he has simply sold himself for Emmeline's money. Sold himself—his smiles, and his pretty speeches, and his handsome face. And now it is all over."

As Judith spoke, Percival understood for the first time what a

woman's voice could be. The girl's soul was filled and shaken with passion. She did not cry aloud, nor rant, but every accent thrilled through him from head to foot. And it seemed to him that she needed no words; that, had she been speaking in an unknown tongue, the very intonation, the mere sound, the vibration of her voice, would have told him of her wounded heart, her despair, her unavailing sorrow, her bitter shame—so eloquent it was. He did not think all this, but, in a passing moment, felt it.

"I fear it is all too true," he said. "I don't know what to say, nor how to help you. Your brother——"

"Don't call him that—he is no brother of mine. Ah, yes! God help me, he *is* my brother; and I think we Lisles bring sorrow to all who are good to us. We have to you, have we not? Don't stay here, Mr. Thorne; don't try to help me. Remember, that I am of the same blood as my father, who robbed you—as Bertie, who has been so base."

"And if Judas himself were your brother—what then?" Percival demanded. His voice, in its masculine vigour and fulness, broke forth suddenly, like a strong creature held till then in a leash. "And as for the money—what of that? I am glad it is gone, or I should not have been here to-day!"

No; he would not have needed to turn clerk, and earn his living. He would not have gone to Brackenhill to confess his poverty. He might never have discovered anything. Most likely he would long since have been Sissy's husband. Sissy seemed far away now. He had loved her—yes. Oh, poor little Sissy, who had clung to him! But what were these new feelings that thronged his heart as he looked at Judith Lisle? He stopped abruptly. What had he said?

Judith, too, looked at him, and grew suddenly calm and still. "You are very good," she said. "I should have been very lonely to-day, if I had not had a friend. It has been a comfort to speak out what I felt, though I am afraid I've talked foolishly——"

"One can't weigh all one's words," said Percival.

"No," she answered; "and I know you will not remember my folly.

"At any rate, I will not forget that you have trusted me. You are tired," he said, gently; "you ought to rest. There is nothing to be done to-night."

"Nothing," she answered, hopelessly.

"And to-morrow, if there is anything that I can do, you will send for me—will you not?"

She smiled.

"Promise me that," he urged, in a tone of authority. "You will?"

"Yes—I promise."

Sometimes, when clouds roll up, black with thunder and rain, to overshadow the heavens, and to deluge the earth, between their masses

you may catch a momentary gleam of blue, faint and infinitely far away, deep, untroubled, most beautiful. Judith had caught such a glimpse that evening, as she bade Percival good-night.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Consequences.

The story of the elopement was in all the local papers, which seemed for once to be printed on Judith Lisle's heart. It was the latest and most exciting topic of conversation in the neighbourhood of Standon Square and St. Sylvester's, and was made doubly interesting by the utter collapse of Mr. Clifton's Easter services, which were to have been something very remarkable indeed. Everyone recollected the young organist, who was so handsome, and who played so divinely. People forgot that his father had failed very disgracefully, and only remembered that Bertie had once been in a much better position. There was a sort of general impression that he was an aristocratic young hero, who lived in lofty poverty, and was a genius into the bargain. No one was very precise about it, but Beethoven and Mendelssohn, and all those people, were likely to find themselves eclipsed some fine morning. Emmeline Nash, of course, became a heroine to match, vaguely sketched as slim, tall, and fair. She had stayed on at Miss Crawford's at an age when a girl's education is generally supposed to be finished, and she had not always gone home for the holidays. These facts were of course the germs of a romance. There was a quarrel with her father, who wished her to marry Some One. No one knew who the some one might be; but as he was only a shadowy figure in the background, his name was of no importance. Emmeline and her music-master had fallen in love at first sight; and when the moment came for the girl to return home, to be persecuted by her father's threats, and by the attentions of the shadowy lover, her heart had failed her, and she had consented to fly with the young musician. As Judith had said, it was a young Lochinvar romance—a boy and girl attachment. No one seemed to think much the worse of Bertie. Hardly anyone called him a fortune-hunter, for Emmeline's money seemed trivial compared with the wealth that he was supposed to have once possessed. And no one thought anything at all of Judith herself or of Miss Crawford.

It would soon be over and forgotten, but Judith suffered acutely while it lasted. Perhaps it was well that she was forced to think about her own prospects, which were none of the brightest.

"Shall you go to Rookleigh?" Percival asked her a couple of days later.

She shook her head. "No; I'm too proud, I suppose, or too

miserable. I can't have my failure here talked over. Aunt Lisle's conversation is full of sharp little pin-pricks, which are all very well when they don't go straight into one's heart."

He saw her lip quiver, as she turned her face away. "Where will you go, then?" he asked, with gentle persistence. It was partly on his own account, for he feared that a blow was in store for him, and he wanted to know the worst.

"I shall not go anywhere. I shall not leave Brenthill."

The blood seemed to rush strongly to his heart; his veins were full of warm life. She would not leave Brenthill.

"I will stay, at any rate, while Miss Crawford remains here. She will not speak to me; she has forbidden me to attempt to see her; but I cannot go away and leave her here alone. I may not be of any use—I do not suppose I shall be—but while she is here I will not go."

"But if she left?"

"Still I would not leave Brenthill if I could get any work to do. I feel as if I must stay here, if only to show that I have not gone away with Bertie, to live on Emmeline's money. Poor Emmeline! And when he used to talk of my not working any more, and he would provide for me, I thought he meant that he would make a fortune with his opera. What a fool I was!"

"It was a folly to be proud of."

He was rewarded with a faint smile, but the delicate curve of the girl's lips relaxed into sadness all too soon.

The table at her side was strewn with sheets of roughly blotted music, mixed with others, daintily neat, which Judith herself had copied. "His opera," she repeated, laying the leaves in order. "Emmeline will be promoted to the office of critic and admirer now, I suppose. But I think the admiration will be too indiscriminate even for Bertie. Poor Emmeline!"

"What are you going to do with all these?" said Thorne, laying his hand on the papers.

"I am putting them together to send to him. I had a letter this morning, so I know his address now. He seems very hopeful, as usual, and thinks her father will forgive them before long."

"And do you think there is a chance of it?"

"No, I don't. Bertie did not hear what Mr. Nash said that afternoon to Miss Crawford and to me," she replied; and once again the colour rushed to her face at the remembrance.

"Miss Lisle!" said Percival suddenly, "I am ready to make every allowance for Mr. Nash; but if——"

"Oh, it was nothing! He was angry, as he had reason to be, that was all. And you see I am not used to angry men."

"I should hope not. I wish I had been there!"

"And I don't," said Judith softly. "I think you might not have been very patient, and I felt that one ought to be patient for Miss

Crawford's sake. Besides, if you had been there I could not have—— Bertie writes in capital spirits," she continued, with a sudden change of tone. "He wants me to go and join them. He is just the same as ever, only rather proud of himself."

"Proud of himself! In heaven's name, why?"

"Why, he is only two-and-twenty, and has secured a comfortable income for the rest of his life by his own exertions. Naturally, he is proud of himself." Percival had learned now that Judith never suffered more keenly than when she spoke of Bertie in a jesting tone, and it pained him for her sake. He looked sorrowfully at her. "Mr. Thorne," she went on, "he does not even suspect that what he has done is anything but praiseworthy, and rather clever. He does not so much as mention Miss Crawford. And I am haunted by a feeling that we have somehow wronged my mother—wronging her old friend."

Percival did not tell her that he too had had a letter from Bertie. It was in his pocket as he stood there, and when he went away he took it out and read it again.

Bertie was as light-hearted as she had said. He enclosed an order for the money taken from the desk, and hoped Thorne had not wanted it; or, if he had been put to any inconvenience, he must forgive him this once, as he, Lisle, did not suppose he should ever run away in that style again.

"I think the old man will come round without much fuss," Bertie went on. "We have been very penitent—the waste of note-paper before we could get our feelings properly expressed was something frightful; but the money was well laid out, for we have heard from him again, and there is a perceptible softening in the tone of his letter. Emmeline assures me that he is passionately fond of music, and reminds me how anxious he was that she should learn to play. The reasoning does not exactly convince me, but if the old fellow does but imagine that he has a passion for music, I will conquer him through that. And if the worst comes to the worst, and he is as stony-hearted as one of his own fossils, we have only to manage for this year, and we must come into our money when Emmeline is twenty-one. But I have no fear. He will relent, and we shall be comfortably settled under the paternal roof long before Christmas.

"What did old Clifton say and do when he found I had bolted? And how did the Easter services go off? Those blessed Easter services that he was in such a state of mind about! Was he very savage? Send me as graphic a description as you can.

"Excuse a smudge, but Emmeline and I are bound to do a good deal of hugging and kissing just now—a honeymoon after an elopement is something remarkably sweet, as you may suppose—and her sleeve brushed the wet ink. This particular embrace was on the occasion of her departure to put on her things. We are going out.

"Don't they say that married women always give up their accom-

plishments? Emmeline is a married woman, therefore Emmeline will give up her music. How soon do you suppose she will begin?"

Half a page more of Bertie's random scribble brought him to a conclusion, but it was not a final one, for he had added a couple of lines. "P.S. Persuade J. to shake herself free of Brenthill as soon as possible; there can be no need for her to work now, thank God! You know it has always been my daydream, and hope, to provide for her. You must come and see us too. Come soon, before we go to my father-in-law's. Goodbye—we are off. P.S. No. 2. No, we are not. E. has forgotten her parasol, and is gone for it. How is Lydia? What did she say when she heard the news? I suppose by this time everybody knows it."

Percival's lip curved with scorn and disgust as he refolded the letter, in which Emmeline, Judith, and Lydia jostled each other as they might have done in a bad dream. Then he looked up, being suddenly aware of eyes that were fixed upon him. Miss Bryant stood in the doorway.

"You've heard from *him*, Mr. Thorne?"

Percival did not choose to answer as if he were in Miss Bryant's secrets, and knew as a matter of course that "*him*" meant Lisle. Neither did he choose to say that he did not know who was intended by the energetic pronoun. He looked back at Lydia politely and inquiringly, as if he awaited further information before he could be expected to reply.

"Oh, you know," said Lydia, scornfully. "You have heard from Mr. Bertie Lisle?"

"Yes," Percival acquiesced, gravely.

"Well?"

"Well—what, Miss Bryant?"

"What does he say?" Lydia demanded; and when Thorne arched his brows, "Oh, you needn't look as if you thought it wasn't my business. I've a right to ask after him, at any rate, for old acquaintance sake."

"I'm sorry to hear you take so much interest in him," he rejoined.

"Why? You may keep your sorrow for your own affairs—I'll manage mine. I can take very good care of myself, I assure you, and I won't trouble you to be sorry for me," said Lydia, shortly. I do not think she had ever spoken to a young man before, and been unconscious that it *was* a young man to whom she spoke. But she was utterly heedless of Percival as she questioned him, and he perceived it, and preferred this angry mood. "Can't you tell me anything about him?" said the girl. "Is he well—happy?"

"He writes in the best of spirits."

Lydia advanced a step or two. "And is it all true what they are saying? He has married this young lady?"

"Yes, he has married her."

"And do you suppose he cares for her?" said Lydia, slowly.

Thorne's brows went up again. "Really, Miss Bryant——"

"Because, if he does, he has told lies enough—that's all."

("And he isn't a miracle of honour if he doesn't," said Percival.)

"But that's quite likely," Lydia went on, unheeding. "I knew all the time that he didn't mean any good. He thought I believed him, but I didn't—not more than half, anyhow. But when he went away, I didn't guess it was for this."

"You knew he was going?" said Thorne.

Lydia half smiled, in conscious superiority.

"You don't seem to have served yourself particularly well by keeping his secrets. You are deceived at last, like the rest."

"Well, if I haven't served myself, I've served him," said Lydia. "And I don't know but what I am glad of it. He wasn't as stuck up and proud as some people. One likes to be looked at, and spoken to, as if one wasn't dirt under people's feet. And, after all, I don't see that there's any harm done." There were red rims to Lydia's eyes, telling of tears which must surely have been too persistent to pass for tears of joy at the tidings of Bertie's elopement. "I suppose a marriage like that is all right?" she asked, with a quick glance.

"Of course—no doubt of it," said Percival very shortly. He had pitied her a moment earlier.

"Ah! I supposed so. But things ain't always all right when people run away. And the money's all right too, is it?"

"Some of it, at any rate," said Thorne, taking a book from the table.

"Wouldn't he be sure to take care of that! And there's more to come if the father likes, isn't there? He'll get that too—see if he doesn't."

"It is to be hoped he will—for Mrs. Lisle's sake. Otherwise I cannot say I care to discuss his prospects."

"Well," said Lydia after a pause, during which she turned a ring slowly on her finger. "Well—I'll wish him all the happiness he deserves."

Percival's lip curved a little. "Miss Bryant, are you absolutely pitiless?"

Lydia's expression was rather blank. "What do you mean? No, I ain't," she said. "I've nothing more to do with him. He hasn't done me any harm, and I won't wish him any. At least—only a little!" With which small ebullition of feminine tenderness and spite, she fled hurriedly downstairs to shed a few more tears, and left Thorne to write his letter to Lisle. It was brief, and none the sweeter for that recent interview.

"I return the money," Percival wrote, "which you say was so useful to you. I know that what you have sent me is not yours but your wife's, and I cannot conscientiously say that I think Mrs. Herbert Lisle is indebted to me in any way.

"I have not delivered your message to your sister. I have no wish to insult her in her trouble, and I know she would feel such persuasion a cruel insult, as indeed I think it would be."

Judith, at the same time, was writing.

"From this time our paths must lie apart. I will never touch a penny of your wife's money. Do not dare to offer me a share of it again. It seems to me that all the shame and sorrow is mine, and you have only the prosperity. Not for the whole world would I change burdens with you.

"Miss Crawford is going to give up her school at once. She will not see or speak to me, for she suspects me of having been your accomplice. And I cannot help blaming myself that I trusted you so foolishly. But I could not have believed that you would have been false to her—our one friend—our mother's friend. Is it possible that you do not see that everyone under her roof should have been sacred to you? But what is the use of saying anything now?

"I don't know, after this, how to appeal to you, and I don't want any promises; but if you feel any regret for the pain you have caused, and if you really wish to do anything for me, I entreat you, be good to Emmeline. It is the only favour I will ever ask of you. She is young and weak—poor girl—and she has trusted you utterly. In God's name, do not repay her trust as you have repaid Miss Crawford's and mine!"

Bertie's incredulous amazement was visible in every line of his answer to Percival.

"Are you both cracked—you and Judith—or am I dreaming? I have read your letters a score of times, and I think I understand them less than I did. Here are sweet bells jangled out of tune with a vengeance, and Heaven only knows what all the row is about—I don't.

"Do you suppose a man never made a runaway match before? And how could I do otherwise than as I did? Was I to stop and consult all the old women in the parish about it—ask Miss Crawford's blessing, and get my sister to look out my train for me, and pack my portmanteau? Can't you see that I was obliged to deceive you a little?

"And what is amiss with the marriage itself? It is true that just now Emmeline has the money and I have none, but do you suppose I am going to remain in obscurity all my life? A few years hence you shall own that it was not at all a bad match for her. Old Nash is nobody, though he is clever enough in his own way. His father was a tailor, and made a good lot of money so. By the way, he is certainly coming round (Mr. Nash, I mean, not my grandfather-in-law the tailor—he is dead), and if he doesn't object, why should anybody else?

"If I have done Miss Crawford any harm, I'm very sorry of course. Can't I help her in some way?"

The reply to Judith's letter came in a feeble, girlish handwriting. It

began: "Herbert tells me you are angry with him because he deceived you about our marriage," and it ended "Your affectionate sister, Emmeline Lisle." The writer was evidently in the seventh heaven of bliss. Her letter was an attempt at persuading Judith, but it was sprinkled all over with fond allusions to Bertie—"My dear, dear husband," "my own dearest," "darlingest Herbert," "my own love,"—and in one place there was an unnecessary little parenthesis, "he is such a *dear*, you know." It was silly enough to be maddening, but it was wonderfully happy, with the writer's adoration of Bertie, and her serene certainty that Bertie adored her. Clearly no shadow of doubt had crossed Emmeline's mind. There was not such another man in all the world as Herbert Lisle, and she was his ideal woman. Every other girl must envy her the prize she had won. Even his sister was jealous and angry when she found that she held only the second place in his affections. Emmeline, elated by her proud position, reasoned sweetly with the unreasonable Judith, who read the foolish scribble with mingled irritation, laughter, contempt, and almost tears. At the end were three lines in another hand.

"Judith, you *must* let me send you some money. If you don't understand why yet, you will soon. You really must."

"Does he think I can't get a situation without his help?" Judith wondered. She smiled, for she had found one. Mrs. Barton had come to her assistance—Mrs. Barton, whose stupid little daughter Judith was still patiently teaching. She understood the girl's wish to remain at Brenthill; she believed in her, and sympathised with her, and exerted herself in her behalf. She brought her the offer of a situation in a school for little boys, where she would live in the house and have a small salary. "It won't be like Miss Crawford's, you know," the good lady said.

"It will do—whatever it is," Judith answered.

"It is a school of quite a different class. Miss Macgregor is a woman who drives hard bargains. She will overwork you, I'm afraid—I only hope she won't underfeed you. You will certainly be underpaid. She takes advantage of the cause of your leaving Standon Square, and of the fact that you can't ask Miss Crawford for testimonials. She is delighted at the idea of getting a really good teacher for next to nothing."

"Still it is in Brenthill," said Judith, "and that is the great thing. Thank you very much, Mrs. Barton. I will take it."

"She will reopen school in about ten days."

"That will suit me very well—won't it? I must pack up here, and settle everything." And Judith cast a desolate glance round the room where she had come with such happy hopes, to begin a new life with Bertie.

Mrs. Barton's eyes were fixed on her. "I am half inclined now to wish I hadn't said anything about Miss Macgregor at all," she remarked.

"Why? If you only knew how grateful I am!"

"That's just it. Grateful! And that schoolmistress will work you to death, I know she will!"

"She must take a little time about it," said the girl with a smile. "Perhaps before she has quite finished I may hear of something else. What I want is something to enable me to stay at Brenthill, and this will answer the purpose."

Mrs. Barton stood up to go. "I've made one stipulation," she said. "Miss Macgregor will let you come to us every Wednesday afternoon to give Janie her lesson."

"Oh, how good you are!" Judith exclaimed. "I thought all that must be over."

"I wish I could have you altogether," Mrs. Barton said. "It would be charming for Janie and for me too. But unfortunately that can't be." She had her hand on the handle of the half-open door. As she spoke there was a quick step on the stairs, and Percival Thorne went by. A slanting light, from the window in the passage, fell on his sombre, olive-tinted face, with a curiously picturesque effect. An artist might have painted him, emerging thus from the dusky shadows. He carried himself with a defiant pride—was he not Judith's friend and champion?—and bowed, with a glance that was at once eager and earnest, when he caught sight of the young girl, behind her friend's substantial figure. His strongly-marked courtesy was so evidently natural, that it could not strike anyone as an exaggeration of ordinary manners, but rather as the perfection of some other manners, no matter whether those of a nation, or a time, or only his own. Mrs. Barton was startled and interested by the sudden apparition. The good lady was romantic in her tastes, and this was like a glimpse of a living novel. "Who was that?" she asked hurriedly.

"Mr. Thorne. He lodges here," said Judith.

"A friend of your brother's?"

"He was very good to my brother."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Barton. "My dear, he is very handsome."

Judith smiled.

"He is!" exclaimed her friend. "Don't say he isn't, for I shan't believe you mean it. He is *very* handsome—like a Spaniard—like a cavalier—like some one in a tragedy. Now isn't he?"

Mrs. Barton's romantic feelings found no outlet in her daily round of household duties. Mr. Barton was good, but commonplace, so was Janie; and Mrs. Barton was quite conscious that there was nothing poetical or striking in her own appearance. But Miss Lisle, with her "great, grave griefful air," was fit to take a leading part in poem or drama, and here was a man, worthy to play hero, passing her on the staircase of a dingy lodging house. Mrs. Barton built up a romance in a moment, and was quite impatient to bid Judith farewell, that she might work out the details as she walked along the street.

The unconscious hero of her romance was divided between pleasure and regret, when he heard of the treaty concluded with Miss Macgregor. It was much that Judith could remain at Brenthill; but one day, on his way to dinner, he went and looked at the outside of the house which was to be her home, and its aspect did not please him. It stood in a gloomy street; it was prim, straight, narrow, and altogether hideous. A tiny bit of arid garden in front gave it a prudish air of withdrawing from the life and traffic of the thoroughfare. The door opened as Percival looked, and a woman came out, frigid, thin-lipped, and sandy-haired. She paused on the step and gave an order to the servant—evidently she was Miss Macgregor. Percival's heart died within him. "That harpy!" he said, under his breath. The door closed behind her, and there was a prison-like sound of making fast within. The young man turned and walked away, oppressed by a sense of grey dreariness. "Will she be able to breathe in that jail?" he wondered to himself. "Bellevue Street is a miserable hole, but at least one is free there." He prolonged his walk a little, and went through Standon Square. It was bright and pleasant in the spring sunshine, and the trees in the garden had little leaves on every twig. A man was painting the railings of Montague House, and another was putting a brass plate on the door. There was a new name on it; Miss Crawford's reign was over for ever.

Percival counted the days that still remained before Judith's bondage would begin, and Bellevue Street be desolate as of old. Yet, though he prized every hour, they were miserable days. Lydia Bryant haunted him, not with her former airs and graces, but with malicious hints in her speech, and little traps set for Miss Lisle and himself. She would gladly have found an occasion for slander, and Percival read her hate of Judith in the cunning eyes which watched them both. He felt that he had already been unwary, and his blood ran cold as he thought of possible gossip, and the manner in which Lydia's insinuations would be made. Precious as those few days were, he longed for the end. He thought more than once of leaving Bellevue Street, but such a flight was impossible. He was chained there by want of money. He could not pay his debt to Mrs. Bryant for weeks, and he could not leave while it was unpaid. Day after day he withdrew himself more, and grew almost cold in his reserve, hoping to escape from Lydia. One morning, as they passed on the stairs, he looked back and caught a glance from Judith, never intended to meet his eye—a sad and wondering glance, which made his heart ache, even while filling it with the certainty that he was needed. He answered only with another glance. It seemed to him to convey nothing of what he felt, but nevertheless it woke a light in the girl's eyes. Moved by a quick impulse, Percival looked up, and following his example, Judith lifted her head, and saw Miss Bryant leaning over the banisters and watching them with a curiosity which changed to an unpleasant smile, when she found herself observed. It was a revelation

to Judith. She fled into her room, flushing hotly with indignation against Lydia for her spitefully suggestive watchfulness; with shame for herself, that Percival's sense of her danger should have been keener than her own, and with generous pride and confidence in him. Thus to have been guarded might have been an intolerable humiliation, but Judith found some sweetness even in the sting. It was something new to her to be cared for and shielded; and while she resolved to be more careful in future, her dominant feeling was of disgust at the curiosity which could so misunderstand the truest and purest of friendships. "*He* understands me at any rate," said poor Judith to herself, painfully conscious of her glowing cheeks. "*He* understands me—he will not think ill of me—but he shall never have to fear for me again." It might be questioned whether Percival did altogether understand her. If he did, he was more enlightened than Judith herself.

After that day she shrank from Percival, and they hardly saw each other till she left. She knew his hours of going and coming, and was careful to remain in her room, though it might be that the knowledge drew her to the window that looked into Bellevue Street. As for Percival, though he never sought her, it seemed to him that his sense of hearing was quickened. Judith's footstep on the stairs was always distinct to him, and the tone of her voice, if she spoke to Miss Bryant or Emma, was noted and remembered. It is true that this strained anxiety sometimes made him an involuntary listener to gossip, or household arrangements, in which Miss Lisle took no active part. One day there was a hurried conversation just outside his door.

"Did you give it to her?" said Lydia's voice.

Emma replied "Yes'm."

"Open? Just as it came? Just as I gave it to you?"

Emma again replied, "Yes'm."

"Did she look surprised?"

"She gave a little jump, Miss," said Emma deliberately, as if weighing her words, "and she looked at it back and front."

"Well, what then? Go on."

"Oh! then she laid it down, and said it was quite right, and she'd see about it."

Lydia laughed. "I think there'll be some more——" she said. Percival threw the tongs into the fender, and the dialogue came to an abrupt termination. "She," who gave a little jump, was Miss Lisle, of course. But there would be some more —— what? The young man revolved the matter gloomily in his mind, as he paced to and fro within the narrow limits of his room. A natural impulse had caused him to interrupt Lydia's triumphant speech, which he knew was not intended for his ears, but her laugh rang in the air and mocked him. What was the torture that she had devised, and whose effects she so curiously analysed? There would be more —— what?

He thought of it that night, he thought of it the next morning, and

still he could not solve the mystery. But, as he came from the office in the middle of the day, he passed his bootmaker's; and the worthy man, who was holding the door open for a customer to go out, stopped him with an apology. Percival's heart beat fast; never before had he stood face to face with a tradesman, and felt that he could not pay him what he owed. His bill had not yet been sent in, and the man had never shown any inclination to hurry him, but he was evidently going to ask for his money now. Percival controlled his face with an effort, prepared for the humiliating confession of his poverty, and found that Mr. Robinson—with profuse excuses for the trouble he was giving—was begging to be told Mr. Lisle's address.

"Mr. Lisle's address?" Thorne repeated the words, but as he did so the matter suddenly became clear to him, and he went on easily: "Oh, I ought to have told you that Mr. Lisle's account was to be sent to me. If you have it there, I'll take it."

Mr. Robinson fetched it with more apologies. He was impressed by the lofty carelessness with which the young man thrust the paper into his pocket, and as Thorne went down the street the little bootmaker looked after him with considerable admiration. "Anyone can see he's quite the gentleman, and so was the other. This one'll make his way too, see if he doesn't!" Mr. Robinson imparted these opinions to Mrs. Robinson over their dinner, and was informed in return that he wasn't a prophet, so he needn't think it! and the young men who gave themselves airs, and wore smart clothes, weren't the ones to get on in the world,—and Mrs. Robinson had no patience with such nonsense.

Meanwhile Percival had gone home with his riddle answered. More —— what? More unsuspected debts, more bills of Bertie's, to be sent in to the poor girl who had been so happy in the thought that, although their income was small, at least they owed nothing. Percival's heart ached as he pictured Judith's start of surprise when Emma carried in the open paper, her brave smile, her hurried assurance that it was all right, and Lydia laughing outside at the thought of more to come. "She'll pay them all," said Percival to himself. "She won't take a farthing of that girl's money. She'll die sooner than not pay them; but I incline to think she won't pay this one." His mind was made up long before he reached Bellevue Street. If by any sacrifice of pride or comfort he could keep the privilege of helping Judith altogether to himself, he would do so. If that were impossible, he would get the money from Godfrey Hammond. But he felt doubtful whether he should like Godfrey Hammond quite as well when he should have asked and received this service at his hands. "I ought to like him all the better if he helped her when I couldn't manage it. It would be abominably unjust if I didn't. In fact I *must* like him all the better for it, it stands to reason I must. I'll be shot if I should, though! and I don't much think I could ever forgive him."

Percival found that the debt was a small one, and calculated that by

a miracle of economy he might pay it out of his salary at the end of the week. Consequently, he dined out two or three days. At least he did not dine at home; but his dissipation did not seem to agree with him, for he looked white and tired. Luckily he had not to pay for his lodgings till Mrs. Bryant came back, and he sincerely hoped that the good lady would be happy with her sister Mrs. Smith, till his finances were in better order. When he got his money he lost no time in settling Mr. Robinson's little account, and was fortunate enough to intercept another, about which Mr. Brett, the tailor, was growing seriously uneasy. He would not for the world have parted with the precious document, but he began to wonder how he should extricate himself from his growing embarrassments. Lydia—half suspicious, half laughing—made a remark about his continual absence from home. "You're getting to be very gay, ain't you, Mr. Thorne?" she said; and she pulled her curl with her old liveliness, and watched him while she spoke.

"Well—rather so—it does seem like it," he allowed.

"I think you'll be getting too fine for Bellevue Street," said the girl; "I'm afraid we ain't scarcely smart enough for you already."

Had she any idea how much he was in their power? Was this a taunt, or a chance shot?

"Oh no! I think not," he said. "You see, Miss Bryant, I'm used to Bellevue Street now. By the way, I shall dine out again to-morrow."

"What? again to-morrow?" Lydia compressed her lips, and looked at him. "Oh, very well—it is a fine thing to have friends make so much of one," she said, as she turned to leave the room.

Percival came home late the next evening. As he passed Judith's sitting-room the door stood wide and revealed its desolate emptiness. Was she gone, absolutely gone? And he had been out and had never had a word of farewell from her. Perhaps she had looked for him in the middle of the day, and wondered why he did not come. Downstairs he heard Lydia calling to the girl: "Emma, didn't I tell you to put the 'Lodgings' card up in the window, as soon as Miss Lisle was out of the house? It might just as well have been up before. What d'ye mean by leaving it lying here on the table? You're enough to provoke a saint—that you are! How d'ye know a score of people mayn't have been looking for lodgings to-day, and I daresay there won't be one to-morrow! If ever there was a lazy, good-for-nothing——" The violent slamming of the kitchen-door cut off the remainder of the discourse, but a shrill screaming voice might still be heard. Percival was certain that the tide of eloquence flowed on undiminished, though of articulate words he could distinguish none. It is to be feared that Emma was less fortunate.

It was true, then—Judith was gone! and that without a farewell look, or touch of the hand, to mark the day. They had lived for months under the same roof, and, though days might pass without granting them

a glimpse of each other, the possibility of a meeting was continually with them. It was only that night that Percival, sitting by his cheerless fireside, understood what that possibility had been to him. He consoled himself as well as he could, for his ignorance of the hour of Judith's departure, by reflecting that Lydia would have followed her about with malicious watchfulness, and would either have played the spy at their interview, or invented a parting instead of that which she had not seen. "She can't gossip now," thought Percival.

Meanwhile Lydia perceived, beyond a doubt, that they must have arranged some way of meeting, since they had not taken the trouble to say "Good-bye."

" FOTHERGILL, IS SHE MUCH HURT ?"

THE

CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

NOVEMBER, 1878.

"For Percival."

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Engagements—Hostile and Otherwise.

THE fairest season of the year, the debatable ground between spring and summer, had come round once more. There were leaves on the trees, and flowers in the grass. The sunshine was golden and full, not like the bleak brightness of March. The winds were warm, the showers soft. Percival, always keenly affected by such influences, felt as if a new life had come to him with the spring. Now that the evenings had grown long and light, he could escape into the country, breathe a purer air, and wander in fields and lanes. And as he wandered, musing, it seemed to him that he had awakened from a dream.

He looked back upon the past year, and he was more than half inclined to call himself a fool. He had taken up work for which he was not fit. He could see that now. He knew very well that his life was almost intolerable, and that it would never be more tolerable unless help came from without.

He could never grow accustomed to his drudgery. He could work honestly, but he could never put his heart into it. And even if he could have displayed ten times as much energy, if his aptitude for business had been ten times as great, if Mr. Ferguson had estimated him so highly as to take him as articled clerk, if he had passed all his examinations, and been duly admitted, if the brightest possibilities in such a life as his had become realities, and he had attained at last to a small share in the business,—what would be the end of this most improbable success? Merely that he would have to spend his whole life in Brenthill, absorbed in law. Now the law was a weariness to him, and he loathed Brenthill. Yet he had voluntarily accepted a life which could offer him no higher prize than such a fate as this, when Godfrey Hammond, or Mrs. Middleton, or even old Hardwicke, would no doubt have helped him to something better.

Certainly he had been a fool! and yet, while he realised this truth, he sincerely respected—I might almost say he admired—his own folly. He had been sick of dependence, and he had gone down at once to the bottom of everything, taken his stand on firm ground, and conquered independence for himself. He had gained the precious knowledge that he could earn his own living by the labour of his hands. He might have been a fool to reject the help that would have opened some higher and less distasteful career to him; yet, if he had accepted it, he would never have known the extent of his own powers. He would have been a hermit-crab still, fitted with another shell by the kindness of his friends. Had he clearly understood what he was doing when he went to Brenthill, it was very likely that he might never have gone. He was almost glad that he had not understood.

And now, having conquered in the race, could he go back and ask for the help which he had once refused? Hardly. The life in which we first gain independence may be stern and ugly, the independence itself—when we gather in our harvest—may have a rough and bitter taste, yet it will spoil the palate for all other flavours. They will seem sickly sweet after its wholesome austerity. Neither did Percival feel any greater desire for a career of any kind, than he had felt a year earlier, when he talked over his future life with Godfrey Hammond. If he were asked what was his day-dream, his castle in the air, the utmost limit of his earthly wishes, he would answer now as he would have answered then, "Brackenhill," dismissing the impossible idea with a smile, even as he uttered it. Asked what would content him—since we can hardly hope to draw the highest prize in our life's lottery—he would answer now as then: to have an assured income sufficient to allow him to wander on the continent, to see pictures, old towns, Alps, rivers, blue sky; wandering, to remain a foreigner all his life, so that there might always be something a little novel and curious about his food and his manner of living (things which are apt to grow so hideously commonplace in the land where one is born); to drink the wine of the country, to read many

poems in verse, in prose, in the scenery around; and through it all, from first to last, to "dream deliciously."

And yet, even while he felt that his desire was unchanged, he knew that there was a fresh obstacle between him and its fulfilment. Heaven help him! had there not been enough before? Was it needful that it should become clear to him that nowhere on earth could he find the warmth and the sunlight for which he pined, while a certain pair of sad eyes grew ever sadder and sadder, looking out on the murky sky, the smoke, the dust, the busy industry of Brenthill? How could he go away? Even these quiet walks of his had pain mixed with their pleasure, when he thought that there was no such liberty for Judith Lisle. Not for her the cowslips in the upland pastures, the hawthorn in the hedges, the elm-boughs high against the breezy sky, the first dog-roses pink upon the briers. Percival turned from them to look at the cloud which hung ever like a dingy smear above Brenthill, and the more he felt their loveliness, the more he felt her loss.

He had no walk on Sunday mornings. A few months earlier Mr. Clifton of St. Sylvester's would have claimed him as a convert. Now he was equally devout, but it was the Evangelical minister, Mr. Bradbury of Christ Church, who saw him week after week, a regular attendant, undaunted and sleepless, though the sermon should be divided into seven heads. Mr. Bradbury preached terribly, in a voice which sometimes died mournfully away, or hissed in a melodramatic whisper, and then rose suddenly in a threatening cry. Miss Macgregor sat in front of a gallery, and looked down on the top of her pastor's head. The double row of little boys, who were marshalled at her side, grew drowsy in the hot weather, blinked feebly as the discourse progressed, and nodded at the congregation. Now and then Mr. Bradbury, who was only, as it were, at arm's length, turned a little, looked up, and flung a red-hot denunciation into the front seats of the gallery. The little boys woke up, heard what was most likely in store for them on the last day, and sat with eyes wide open, dismally surveying the prospect. But presently the next boy fidgeted, or a spider let himself down from the roof, or a bird flew past the window, or a slanting ray of sunlight revealed a multitude of dusty dancing motes, and the little lads forgot Mr. Bradbury, who had forgotten them, and was busy with somebody else. It might be with the Pope. Mr. Bradbury was fond of providing for the Pope. Or perhaps he was wasting his energy on Percival Thorne, who sat with his head thrown back, and his upward glance just missing the preacher, and was quite undisturbed by his appeals.

Judith Lisle had accepted the offer of a situation at Miss Macgregor's with the expectation of being worked to death, only hoping, as she told Mrs. Barton, that the process would be slow. The hope would not have been at all an unreasonable one, if she had undertaken her task in the days when she had Bertie to work for. She could have lived through much when she lived for Bertie. But, losing her brother, the main-

spring of her life seemed broken. One would have said that she had leaned on him, not he on her, she drooped so pitifully now he was gone. Even Miss Macgregor perceived that Miss Lisle was delicate, and expressed her strong disapprobation of such a state of affairs. Mrs. Barton thought Judith looking very far from well, suggested tonics, and began to consider whether she might ask her to go to them for her summer holidays. But to Percival's eyes there was a change from week to week, and he watched her with terror in his heart. Judith had grown curiously younger during the last few months. There had been something of a mother's tenderness in her love for Bertie, which made her appear more than her real age, and gave decision and stateliness to her manner. Now that she was alone, she was only a girl, silent and shrinking, needing all her strength to suffer, and hide her sorrow. Percival knew that each Sunday, as soon as she had taken her place, she would look downward to the pew where he always sat, to ascertain if he were there. For a moment he would meet that quiet gaze, lucid, uncomplaining, but very sad. Then her eyes would be turned to her book, or to the little boys who sat near her, or it might even be to Mr. Bradbury. The long service would begin, go on, come to an end. But before she left her place, her glance would meet his once more, as if in gentle farewell, until another Sunday should come round. Percival would not for worlds have failed at that trysting-place, but he cursed his helplessness. Could he do nothing for Judith but cheer her through Mr. Bradbury's sermons?

About this time he used deliberately to indulge in an impossible fancy. His imagination dwelt on their two lives, cramped, dwarfed, and fettered. He had lost his freedom, but it seemed to him that Judith, burdened once with riches, and later with poverty, never had been free. He looked forward, and saw nothing in the future but a struggle for existence, which might be prolonged through years of labour and sordid care. Why were they bound to endure this? Why could they not give up all for just a few days of happiness? Percival longed intensely for a glimpse of beauty, for a little space of warmth and love, of wealth and liberty. Let their life thus blossom together into joy, and he would be content that it should be like the flowering of the aloe, followed by swift and inevitable death. Only let the death be shared like the life! It would be bitter and terrible to be struck down in their gladness, but if they had truly lived, they might be satisfied to die. Percival used to fancy what they might do in one glorious, golden, sunlit week, brilliant against a black background of death. How free they would be to spend all they possessed, without a thought for the future! Nothing could pall upon them, and he pictured to himself how every sense would be quickened, how passion would gather strength and tenderness, during those brief days, and rise to its noblest height to meet the end. His imagination revelled in the minute details of the picture, adding one by one a thousand touches of beauty and joy, till the dream was life-like in

its loveliness. He could pass in a moment from his commonplace world to this enchanted life with Judith. Living alone, and half starving himself in the attempt to pay his debts, he was in a fit state to see visions, and dream dreams. But they only made his present life more distasteful to him, and the more he dreamed of Judith, the more he felt that he had nothing to offer her.

He was summoned abruptly from his fairyland one night by the arrival of Mrs. Bryant. She made her appearance rather suddenly, and sat down on a chair by the door, to have a little chat with her lodger.

"I came back this afternoon," she said. "I didn't tell Lydia—where was the use of bothering about writing to her? Besides I could just have a look round, and see how Emma 'd done the work while I was away, and how things had gone on altogether." She nodded her rusty black cap confidentially at Percival. It was sprinkled with bugles, which caught the light of his solitary candle.

"I hope you found all right," he said.

"Pretty well," Mrs. Bryant allowed. "It's a mercy when there's no illness, nor anything of that kind—though, if you'll excuse my saying it, Mr. Thorne, you ain't looking as well yourself as I should have liked to see you."

"Oh, I am all right, thank you," said Percival.

Mrs. Bryant shook her head. The different movement brought out quite a different effect of glancing bugles. "Young people should be careful of their health," was her profound remark.

"I assure you there's nothing the matter with me."

"Well, well—we'll hope not," she answered, "though you certainly do look altered, Mr. Thorne, through being thinner in the face, and darker under the eyes."

Percival smiled impatiently.

"What was I saying?" Mrs. Bryant continued. "Oh, yes—that there was a many mercies to be thankful for. To find the house all right, and the times and times I've dreamed of fire, and the engines not to be had, and woke up shaking so as you'd hardly believe it—and I don't really think that I've gone to bed hardly one night without wondering whether Lydia had fastened the door, and the little window into the yard, which is not safe if left open. As regular as clockwork, when the time came round, I'd mention it to my sister——"

Percival sighed briefly, probably pitying the sister. "I think Miss Bryant has been very careful in fastening everything," he said.

"Well, it does seem so, and very thankful I am. And as I always say when I go out, 'Waste I *must* expect, and waste I *do* expect,' but it's a mercy when there's no thieving."

"Things will hardly go on quite the same when you are not here to look after them, Mrs. Bryant."

"No—how should they?" the landlady acquiesced. "Young heads

ain't like old ones, as I said one evening to my sister when Smith was by. Young heads ain't like old ones, said I. 'Why, no,' said Smith, 'they're a deal prettier.' I told him he ought to have done thinking of such things. And so he ought—a man of his age. But that's what the young men mostly think of, ain't it, Mr. Thorne? Though it's the old heads make the best housekeepers, I think, when there's a lot of lodgers to look after."

"Very likely," said Percival.

"I dare say you think there'd be fine times for the young men lodgers, if it wasn't for the old heads. And I don't blame you, Mr. Thorne—it's only natural, and what we must expect in growing old. And if anything could make one grow old before one's time, and live two years in one, so to speak, I do think it's letting lodgings."

Percival expressed himself as not surprised to hear it, though very sorry that lodgers were so injurious to her health.

"There's my drawing-room empty now, and two bedrooms," Mrs. Bryant continued. "Not but what I've had an offer for it this very afternoon, since coming back. But it doesn't do to be too hasty. Respectable parties who pay regular," she nodded a little at Percival, as if to point the compliment, "are the parties for me."

"Of course," he said.

"A queer business that of young Mr. Lisle's, wasn't it?" she went on. "I should say it was about time that Miss Crawford did shut up, if she couldn't manage her young ladies better. I sent my Lydia to a boarding-school once, but it was one of a different kind to that. Pretty goings on there were at Standon Square, I'll be bound, if we only knew the truth. But as far as this goes there ain't no great harm done that I can see. He hasn't done badly for himself, and I dare say they'll be very comfortable. She might have picked a worse—I will say that—for he was always a pleasant-spoken young gentleman, and good-looking too, though that's not a thing to set much store by. And they do say he had seen better times."

She paused. Percival murmured something which was quite unintelligible, but it served to start her off again, apparently under the impression that she had heard a remark of some kind.

"Yes, I suppose so. And as I was saying to Lydia—the coolness of them both—banns and all regular! But there now! I'm talking and talking, forgetting that you were in the thick of it. You knew all about it, I've no doubt, and finely you and he must have laughed in your sleeves——"

"I knew nothing about it, Mrs. Bryant. Nothing."

Mrs. Bryant smiled cunningly, and nodded at him again. But it was an oblique nod this time, and there was a sidelong look to match it. Percival felt as if he were suffering from an aggravated form of nightmare.

"No, no—I dare say you didn't. At any rate, you won't let out if

you did—why should you? It's a great thing to be able to hold one's tongue, Mr. Thorne, and I ought to know, for I've found the advantage of being naturally a silent woman. And I don't say but what you are wise."

"I knew nothing," he repeated doggedly.

"Well, I don't suppose it was any the worse for anybody who *did* know," said Mrs. Bryant. "And though, of course, Miss Lisle lost her situation through it, I dare say she finds it quite made up to her."

"Not at all," said Percival, shortly. The conversation was becoming intolerable.

"Oh, you may depend upon it she does," said Mrs. Bryant. "How should a gentleman like you know all the ins and outs, Mr. Thorne? It makes all the difference to a young woman, having a brother well to do in the world. And very fond of her he always seemed to be, as I was remarking to Lydia."

Percival felt as if his blood were on fire. He dared not profess too intimate a knowledge of Judith's feelings and position, and he could not listen in silence. "I think you are mistaken, Mrs. Bryant," he said, in a tone which would have betrayed his angry disgust to any more sensitive ear. Even his landlady perceived that the subject was not a welcome one.

"Well, well," she said, "it doesn't matter, and I'll only wish you as good luck as Mr. Lisle; for I'm sure you deserve a young lady with a little bit of money as well as he did, and no reason why you shouldn't look to find one, one of these fine days."

"No, Mrs. Bryant, I shan't copy Mr. Lisle."

"Ah, you've something else in your eye, I can see, and perhaps one might make a guess as to a name. Well, people must manage those things their own way, and interfering mostly does harm, I take it. And I'll wish you luck, anyhow."

"I don't think there's any occasion for your good wishes," said Percival. "Thank you all the same."

"Not but what I'm sorry to lose Mr. and Miss Lisle," Mrs. Bryant continued, as if that were the natural end of her previous sentence, "for they paid for everything most regular."

"I hope these people who want to come, may do the same," said Percival. Though he knew that he ran the risk of hearing all that Mrs. Bryant could tell him about their condition and prospects, he felt he could endure anything that would turn the conversation from the Lisles and himself. But there was a different train of ideas in Mrs. Bryant's mind.

"And, by the way," she said, "I think we've some little accounts to settle together, Mr. Thorne." Then Percival perceived, for the first time, that she held a folded bit of paper in her hand. The moment that he feared had come. He rose without a word, went to his desk and un-

locked it. Glancing over his shoulder, he saw that Mrs. Bryant had approached the table, had opened the paper, and was flattening it out with her hand. He stooped over his board—a meagre little hoard this time—counting what he had to give her.

Mrs. Bryant began to hunt in her purse for a receipt stamp. "It's a pleasure to have to do with a gentleman who is always so regular," she said, with an approving smile.

Percival, who was steadying a little pile of coin on the sloping desk, felt a strong desire to tell her the state of affairs while he stooped in the shadow, with his face turned away. Precisely because he felt this desire, he drew himself up to his full height, walked to the table, looked straight into her eyes, and said, "Not so very regular this time, Mrs. Bryant."

She stepped back, with a perplexed and questioning expression, but she understood that something was wrong, and the worn face fell suddenly, deepening a multitude of melancholy wrinkles. He laid the money before her. "That's just half what I owe you; I think you'll find I have counted it all right."

"Half! But where's the other half, Mr. Thorne?"

"Well, I must earn the other half, Mrs. Bryant. You shall have it as soon as I get it."

She looked up at him. "You've got to earn it!" she repeated. Her tone would have been more appropriate if Mr. Thorne had said he must steal it. There was a pause. Mrs. Bryant's lean hand closed over the money. "I don't understand this, Mr. Thorne—I don't understand it at all."

"It is very simple," he replied. "According to your wishes I kept the rent for you, but during your absence there was a sudden call upon me for money, and I could not refuse to advance it. I regret it exceedingly, if it puts you to inconvenience. I had hoped to have made it all right before you returned, but I have not had time. I can only promise you that you shall be paid all that I can put by each week, till I have cleared off my debt."

"Oh, that's all very fine," said Mrs. Bryant. "But I don't think much of promises."

"I'm sorry to hear it," he answered gravely.

She looked hard at him. "I did think you were quite the gentleman, Mr. Thorne. I didn't think you'd have served me so."

"No," said Percival. "I assure you I'm very sorry. If I could explain the whole affair to you, you would see that I am not to blame. But unluckily I can't."

"Oh, I don't want any explanations; I wouldn't give a thank you for a cartload of 'em. Nobody ever is to blame who has the explaining of a thing, if it's ever so rascally a job."

"I am very sorry," he repeated. "But I can only say that you shall be paid."

"Oh, I dare say! Look here, Mr. Thorne, I've heard that sort of thing scores of times. There's always a sudden call for money—it's always something that never happened before, and isn't ever to happen again—and it's always going to be paid back at once, but there's not one in a hundred who does pay it. Once you begin that sort of thing ——"

"You'll find me that hundredth one," said Percival.

"Oh yes. To hear them talk you'd say each one was one in a thousand, at least. But I'd like you to know that though I'm a widow woman I'm not to be robbed and put upon."

"Mrs. Bryant"—Percival's strong voice silenced her querulous tones —"no one wants to rob you. Please to remember that it was entirely of your own free will that you trusted me with the money."

"More fool I!" Mrs. Bryant ejaculated.

"It was to oblige you that I took charge of it."

"And a pretty mess I've made of it. It had better have gone so as to be some pleasure to my own flesh and blood—instead of your spending it in some way you're ashamed to own."

"If you had been here to receive it, it would have been ready for you," Percival went on, ignoring her last speech. "As it is, it has waited all these weeks for you. It isn't unreasonable that it should wait a little longer for me."

She muttered something to the effect that there was justice to be had, though he didn't seem to think it.

"Oh yes," he said, resting his arm on the chimney-piece. "There's the County Court, or something of that kind. By all means go to the County Court if you like. But I see no occasion for discussing the matter any more beforehand."

His calmness had its effect upon her. She didn't want any unpleasantness, she said.

"Neither do I," he replied; "I do not see why there need be any. If I live you will be paid, and that before very long. If I should happen to die first, I have a friend who will settle my affairs for me, and you will be no loser."

Mrs. Bryant suggested that it might be pleasanter for all parties if Mr. Thorne were to apply to his friend at once. She thought very likely there were little bills about in the town—gentlemen very often had little bills—and if there were any difficulties—gentlemen so often got into difficulties—it was so much better to have things settled and make a fresh start. She had no doubt that Mr. Lisle would be very willing.

"Mr. Lisle!" Percival exclaimed. "Do you suppose for one moment I should ask Mr. Lisle?"

Startled at his vehemence Mrs. Bryant begged pardon, and substituted "the gentleman" for "Mr. Lisle."

"Thank you—no," said Percival. "I prefer to manage my own affairs in my own way. If I live I will not apply to any one. But if I must go to my grave owing five or six weeks' rent to one or other of you,

I assure you most solemnly, Mrs. Bryant, that I will owe it to my friend."

The storm had subsided into subdued grumblings. Their purport was apparently that Mrs. Bryant liked lodgers who paid regular, and as for those who didn't, they would have to leave, and she wished them to know it.

"Does that mean that you wish me to go?" the young man demanded with the readiness which was too much for his landlady. "I'll go to-night if you like. Do you wish it?" There was an air of such promptitude about him as he spoke, that Mrs. Bryant half expected to see him vanish then and there. She had by no means made up her mind that she did wish to lose a lodger who had been so entirely satisfactory up to that time. And she preferred to keep her debtor within reach, so she drew back a little, and qualified what she had said.

"Very well," said Percival. "Just as you please."

Mrs. Bryant only hoped it wouldn't occur again. The tempest of her wrath showed fearful symptoms of dissolving in a shower of tears. "You don't know what work I have to make both ends meet, Mr. Thorne," she said, "nor how hard it is to get one's own, let alone keeping it. I do assure you, Mr. Thorne, me and Lydia might go in silks every day of our lives, and needn't so much as soil our fingers with the work of the house, if we had all we rightly should have. But there are folks who call themselves honest, who don't think any harm of taking a widow woman's rooms, and getting behindhand with the rent, running up an account for milk and vegetables and the like by the week together, and there's the bell ringing all day as you may say, with the bills coming in, and one's almost driven out of one's wits with the worry of it all, let alone the loss, which is hard to bear. Oh, I do hope, Mr. Thorne, that it won't occur again!"

"It isn't very likely," said Percival, privately thinking that suicide would be preferable to an existence in which such interviews with his landlady should be of frequent occurrence. Pity, irritation, disgust, pride, and humiliation made up a state of feeling which was overshadowed by a horrible fear that Mrs. Bryant would begin to weep before he could get rid of her. He watched her with ever-increasing uneasiness, while she attempted to give him a receipt for the money he had paid. She began by wiping her spectacles, but her hand trembled so much that she let them fall, and she, Percival, and the candle were all on the floor together, assisting one another in the search for them. The rusty cap was perilously near the flame more than once, which was a cause of fresh anxiety on his part. And when she was once more established at the table, writing a word or two, and then wiping her eyes, it was distracting to discover that the receipt stamp, which Mrs. Bryant had brought with her, and which she was certain she had laid on the table, had mysteriously disappeared. It seemed to Percival that he spent at least a quarter of an hour hunting for that stamp. In reality about two minutes elapsed before it was found sticking to Mrs. Bryant's damp

pocket-handkerchief. It was removed thence with great care, clinging to her fingers by the way, after which it showed a not unnatural disinclination to adhere to the paper. But even that difficulty was at last overcome; a shaky signature and a date were laboriously penned, and Percival's heart beat high, as he received the completed document.

And then—Mrs. Bryant laid down the pen, took off her spectacles, shook her pocket-handkerchief, and deliberately burst into tears.

Percival was in despair. Of course he knew perfectly well that he was not a heartless brute, but equally of course he felt that he must be a heartless brute, as he stood by while Mrs. Bryant wept copiously. Of course he begged her to calm herself, and of course a long drawn sob was her only answer. All at once there was a knock at the door. "Come in," said Percival, feeling that matters could not possibly be worse. It opened, and Lydia stood on the threshold, staring at the pair in much surprise.

"Well, I never!" she said, and turning towards Percival, she eyed him suspiciously, as if she thought he might have been knocking the old lady about. "And pray what may be the meaning of this?"

"Mrs. Bryant isn't quite herself this evening, I am afraid," said Percival, feeling that his reply was very feeble. "And we have had a little business to settle which was not quite satisfactory."

At the word "business" Lydia stepped forward, and her surprise gave place to an expression of half incredulous amusement, Percival would almost have said, of delight.

"What—ain't the money all right?" she said. "You don't say so! Well, ma, you *have* been clever this time, haven't you? Oh I suppose you thought I didn't know what you were after, when you were so careful about not bothering me with the accounts? Lor! I knew fast enough. Don't you feel proud of yourself for having managed it so well?"

Mrs. Bryant wept. Percival, not having a word to say, preserved a dignified silence.

"Come along, ma—I dare say Mr. Thorne has had about enough of this," Lydia went on, coolly examining the paper which lay on the table. She arrived at the total. "Oh! that's it, is it? Well, I like that—I do! Some people are so clever, ain't they? So wonderfully sharp they can't trust their own belongings! I do like that! Come along, ma!" And Lydia seconded her summons with such energetic action that it seemed to Percival that she absolutely swept the old lady out of the room, and that the wet handkerchief, the rusty black gown, and the bugle-sprinkled head-dress vanished in a whirlwind, with a sound of shrill laughter on the stairs.

For a moment his heart leapt with a sudden sense of relief and freedom, but only for a moment. Then he flung himself into his arm-chair utterly dejected and sickened.

Should he be subject to this kind of thing all his life long? If he should chance to be ill, and unable to work, how could he live for any

length of time on his paltry savings? And debt would mean *this!* He need not even be ill. He remembered how he broke his arm once, when he was a lad. Suppose he broke his arm now—a bit of orange-peel in the street might do it—or suppose he hurt the hand with which he wrote.

And this was the life which he might ask Judith to share with him. She might endure Mrs. Bryant's scolding and Lydia's laughter, and pinch and save as he was forced to do, and grow weary, and careworn, and sick at heart. No, God forbid! And yet—and yet—was she not enduring as bad or worse in that hateful school?

Oh for his dream! one week of life and love, and then swift exit from a hideous world, where Mrs. Bryant, and Miss Macgregor, and Lydia, and all his other nightmares might do their worst, and fight their hardest, in their ugly struggle for existence!

Percival had achieved something of a victory in his encounter with his landlady. His manner had been calm and fairly easy, and from first to last she had been more conscious of his calmness than Percival was himself. She had been silenced, not coaxed and flattered as she often was by unfortunate lodgers whose ready money ran short. Indeed she had been defied, and when she recovered herself a little she declared that she had never seen anyone so stuck up as Mr. Thorne. This was unkind, after he had gone down on his knees to look for her spectacles.

But if Percival had conquered, his was but a barren victory. He fancied that an unwonted tone of deference crept into his voice when he gave his orders. He was afraid of Mrs. Bryant. He faced Lydia bravely, but he winced in secret at the recollection of her laughter. He very nearly starved himself lest mother or daughter should be able to say "Mr. Thorne might have remembered his debts before he ordered this, or that." He had paid Lisle's bill at Mr. Robinson's, but he could not forget his own, and he walked past the house daily with his head high, feeling himself a miserable coward.

There was a draper's shop close to it, and as he went by one day he saw a little pony chaise at the door. A girl of twelve or thirteen sat in it, listlessly holding the reins, and looking up and down the street. It was a great field-day for the Brenthill volunteers, and their band came round a corner, not a dozen yards away, and suddenly struck up a triumphant march. The pony, although as quiet a little creature as you could easily find, was startled. If it had been a wooden rocking-horse it might not have minded, but any greater sensibility must have received a shock. The girl uttered a cry of alarm, but there was no cause for it. Percival, who was close at hand, stepped to the pony's head, a lady rushed out of the shop, the band went by in a tempest of martial music, a crowd of boys and girls filled the roadway, and disappeared as quickly as they came. It was all over in a minute. Percival, who was coaxing the pony as he stood, was warmly thanked.

"There is nothing to thank me for," he said. "That band was enough to frighten anything, but the pony seems a gentle little thing."

"So it is," the lady replied. "But you see the driver was very inexperienced, and we really are very much obliged to you, Mr. Thorne."

He looked at her in blank amazement. Had some one from his former life suddenly arisen to claim acquaintance with him? He glanced from her to the girl, but recognised neither. "You know me?" he said.

She smiled. "You don't know me, I dare say. I am Mrs. Barton. I saw you one day when I was just coming away, after calling on Miss Lisle." She watched the hero of her romance as she spoke. His dark face lighted up suddenly.

"I have often heard Miss Lisle speak of you, and of your kindness," he said. "Do you ever see her now?"

"Oh yes. She comes to give Janie her music lesson every Wednesday afternoon. We couldn't do without Miss Lisle, could we, Janie?" The girl was shy and did not speak, but a broad smile overspread her face.

"I had no idea she still came to you. Do you know how she gets on at Miss Macgregor's?" he asked, eagerly. "Is she well? I saw her at church one day, and I thought she was pale."

"She says she is well," Mrs. Barton replied. "But I am not very fond of Miss Macgregor myself—no one ever stays there very long." A shopman came out and put a parcel into the chaise. Mrs. Barton took the reins. "I shall tell Miss Lisle you asked after her," she said, as with a bow and cordial smile she drove off.

It was Monday, and Percival's mind was speedily made up. He would see Judith Lisle on Wednesday.

Tuesday was a remarkably long day, but Wednesday came at last, and he obtained permission to leave the office earlier than usual. He knew the street in which Mrs. Barton lived, and had taken some trouble to ascertain the number, so that he could stroll to and fro at a safe distance, commanding a view of the door.

He had time to study the contents of a milliner's window—it was the only shop near at hand, and even that pretended not to be a shop, but rather a private house, where some one had accidentally left a bonnet or two, a few sprays of artificial flowers, and an old lady's cap, in the front room. He had abundant leisure to watch No. 51 taking in a supply of coals, and No. 63 sending away a piano. He sauntered to and fro so long, with a careless assumption of unconsciousness how time was passing, that a stupid young policeman perceived that he was not an ordinary passer-by. Astonished and delighted at his own penetration, he began to saunter and watch him, trying to make out which house he meant to favour with a midnight visit. Percival saw quite a procession of babies in perambulators being wheeled home by their nurses after their afternoon airing, and he discovered that the nurse at No. 57 had a flirtation with a soldier. But at last the door of No. 69 opened, a slim figure came down the steps, and he started to meet it, leisurely, but with a sudden decision and purpose in his walk. The young policeman saw the meeting; the whole affair became clear to him—why, he had done that sort of

thing himself!—and he hurried off rather indignantly, feeling that he had wasted his time, and that the supposed burglar had not behaved at all handsomely.

And Percival went forward and held out his hand to Judith, but found that even the most commonplace greeting stuck in his throat somehow. She looked quickly up at him, but she too was silent, and he walked a few steps by her side before he said, "I did not know what day you were going away."

The rest of the conversation followed in a swift interchange of question and reply, as if to make up for that pause.

"No, but I thought I should be sure to have a chance of saying goodbye."

"And I was out. I was very sorry when I came home and found that you were gone. But since we have met again it doesn't matter now, does it?" he said, with a smile. "How do you get on at Miss Macgregor's?"

"Oh, very well," she answered. "It will do for the present."

"And Miss Crawford——?"

"She will not see me nor hear from me. She is ill and low-spirited, and Mrs. Barton tells me that a niece has come to look after her."

"Isn't that rather a good thing?"

"No—I don't like it. I saw one or two of those nieces—there are seven of them—great vulgar managing women. I can't bear to think of my dear little Miss Crawford being bullied and nursed by Miss Price. She couldn't endure them, I know, only she was so fond of their mother."

Percival changed the subject. "So you go to Mrs. Barton's still? I didn't know that till last Monday."

"When you rescued Janie from imminent peril—Oh, I have heard," said Judith, with a smile.

"Please to describe me as risking my own life in the act. It would be a pity not to make me heroic while you are about it."

"Janie would readily believe it. She measures her danger by her terror, which was great. But she is a dear, good child, and it is such a pleasure to me to go there every week."

"Ah! Then you are not happy at Miss Macgregor's?"

"Well—not very. But it might be much worse. And I am mercenary enough to think about the money I earn at Mrs. Barton's," said Judith. "I don't mind telling you now that Bertie left two or three little bills unpaid when he went away, and I was very anxious about them. But luckily they were small."

"You don't mind telling me now—are they paid, then?"

"Yes, and I have not heard of any more."

"You paid them out of your earnings?"

"Yes. You understand me, don't you, Mr. Thorne? Bertie and I were together then, and I could not take Emmeline's money to pay our debts."

"Yes. I understand."

"And I had saved a little. It is all right now, since they are all paid. I fancied there would be some more to come in, but it seems not, so I have a pound or two to spare, and I feel quite rich."

It struck Percival that Judith had managed better than he had. "Do you ever hear from him?" he asked.

"Yes. Mr. Nash has forgiven them."

"Already?"

Judith nodded. "He has, though I thought he never would. Bertie understood him better."

(The truth was that she had taken impotent rage for strength of purpose. Mr. Nash was aware that he had neglected his daughter, and was anxious to stifle the thought by laying the blame on every one else. And Bertie was quicker than Judith was in reading character when it was on his own level.)

"He has forgiven them," Percival repeated, with a smile. "Well, Bertie is a lucky fellow."

"So is my father lucky—if that is luck."

"Your father?"

"Yes. He has written to me, and to my aunt Lisle, at Rookleigh, you know. He has taken another name, and it seems he is getting on and making money—*he* wanted to send me some too. And my aunt is angry with me because I would not go to her. She has given me two months to make up my mind in."

"And you will not go?"

"I cannot leave Brenthill," said Judith. "She is more than half inclined to forgive Bertie too. So I am alone—and yet I am right." She uttered the last words with lingering sadness.

"No doubt," Percival answered. They were walking slowly through a quiet back street, with a blank wall on one side. "Still it is hard," he said.

There was something so simple and tender in his tone, that Judith looked up and met his eyes. She might have read his words in them, even if he had not spoken. "Don't pity me, Mr. Thorne," she said.

"Why not?"

"Oh, because—I hardly know why. I can't stand it when anyone is kind to me, or sorry for me, sometimes at Mrs. Barton's. I don't know how to bear it. But it does not matter much, for I get braver and braver when people are hard and cold—I really don't mind that half as much as you would think, so you see you needn't pity me. In fact, you mustn't."

"Indeed, I think I must," said Percival. "More than before."

"No, no!" she answered, hurriedly. "Don't say it. Don't look it. Don't even let me think you do it in your heart. Tell me about yourself. You listen to me, you ask about me, but you say nothing of what you are doing."

"Working." There was a moment's hesitation. "And dreaming," he added.

"But you have been ill?"

"Not I."

"You have not been ill? Then you are ill. What makes you so pale?"

He laughed. "Am I pale?"

"And you look tired."

"My work is wearisome sometimes."

"More so than it was?" she questioned, anxiously. "You used not to look so tired."

"Don't you think that a wearisome thing must grow more wearisome merely by going on?"

"But is that all? Isn't there anything else the matter?"

"Perhaps there is," he allowed. "There are little worries, of course, but shall I tell you what is the great thing that is the matter with me?"

"If you will."

"I miss you, Judith."

The colour spread over her face like a rosy dawn. Her eyes were fixed on the pavement, and yet they looked as if they caught a glimpse of Eden. But Percival could not see that. "You miss me!" she said.

"Yes." He had forgotten his hesitation and despair. He had outstripped them, had left them far behind, and his words sprang to his lips with a glad sense of victory and freedom. "Must I miss you always?" he said. "Will you not come back to me, Judith? My work could never be wearisome then, when I should feel that I was working for you. There would be long to wait, no doubt, and then a hard life—a poor home—what have I to offer you? But will you come?"

She looked up at him. "Do you really want me—or is it that you are sorry for me, and want to help me? Are you sure it isn't that? We Lisles have done you harm enough. I won't do you a worse wrong still."

"You will do me the worst wrong of all if you let such fears and fancies stand between you and me," said Percival. "Do you not know that I love you? You must decide as your own heart tells you. But don't doubt me."

She laid her hand lightly on his arm. "Forgive me, Percival!" And so those two passed together into the Eden which she had seen.

CHAPTER XLIX.

How the Sun rose in Gladness, and set in the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

The Wednesday which was so white a day for Judith and Percival, had dawned brightly at Fordborough. Sissy, opening her eyes on the

radiant beauty of the morning, sprang up with an exclamation of delight. The day before had been grey and uncertain, but this was golden and cloudless. A light breeze tossed the acacia boughs, and showed flashes of blue between the quivering sprays. The dew was still hanging on the clustered white roses which climbed to her open window, and the birds were singing among the leaves, as if they were running races in a headlong rapture of delight. Sissy did not sing, but she said to herself, "Oh, how glad the Latimers must be!"

She was right, for at a still earlier hour the Latimer girls had been flying in and out of their respective rooms, in a perfectly aimless, joyous, childishly happy fashion, like a flock of white pigeons. And the sum of their conversation was simply this, "Oh, what a day! What a glorious day!" Yet it sufficed for a Babel of bird-like voices. At last one, more energetic than the rest, in her white dressing-gown, and with her hair hanging loose, flew down the long oak-panelled corridor, and knocked with might and main at her brother's door. "Walter! Walter! Wake up, do! You said it would rain, and it doesn't rain! It is a *lovely* morning! O Walter!"

Walter responded briefly, to the effect that he had been awake since half after three, and was aware of the fact.

Henry Hardwicke, who had been to the river for an early swim, stopped to discuss the weather with a labourer who was plodding across the fields. The old man looked at the blue sky with an air of unutterable wisdom, made some profound remarks about the quarter in which the wind was, added a local saying or two bearing on the case, and summed up to the effect that it was a fine day.

Captain Fothergill had no particular view from his window, but he inquired at an early hour what the weather was like.

Ashendale Priory was a fine old ruin, belonging to the Latimers, and about six miles from Latimer's Court. Sissy Langton had said one day that she often passed it in her rides, but had never been into it. Walter Latimer was astonished, horrified, and delighted, all at once, and vowed that she must see it, and should see it, without delay. This Wednesday had been fixed for an excursion there, but the project was nearly given up on account of the weather. As late as the previous afternoon the question was seriously debated at the Court, by a council composed of Walter and three of his sisters. One of the members was sent to look at the barometer. She reported that it had gone up in the most extraordinary manner since luncheon.

The announcement was greeted with delight, but it was discovered late that evening, that Miss Latimer had had a happy thought. Fearing that the barometer would be utterly ruined by the shaking and tapping which it underwent, she had screwed it up to a height at which her younger brothers and sisters could not wish to disturb it, had gone into the village, and had forgotten all about it. There was general dismay and laughter.

"It will rain," said Walter; "it will certainly rain. I thought it was very queer. Well, it is too late to do anything now. We must just wait and see what happens."

And behold the morrow had come, the clouds were gone, and it was a day in a thousand, a very queen of days.

The party started for Ashendale, some riding, some driving, waking the quiet green lanes with a happy tumult of wheels, and horse-hoofs, and laughing voices. Captain Fothergill contrived to be near Miss Langton, and to talk in a fashion which made her look down once or twice, when she had encountered the eagerness of his dark eyes. The words he said might have been published by the town-crier. But that functionary would not have reproduced the tone and manner which rendered them significant, though Sissy hardly knew the precise amount of meaning they were intended to convey. She was glad when the tower of the Priory rose above the trees. So was Walter Latimer, who had been eyeing the back of Fothergill's head, or the sharply-cut profile which was turned so frequently towards Miss Langton, and who was firmly persuaded that the Captain ought to be shot.

Ashendale Priory was built nearly at the bottom of a hill. Part of it, close by the gateway, was a farm-house, occupied by a tenant of the Latimers. His wife, a pleasant middle-aged woman, came out to meet them as they dismounted, and a rosy daughter of sixteen or seventeen lingered shyly in the little garden, which was full to overflowing of old-fashioned flowers, and humming with multitudes of bees. The hot sweet fragrance of the crowded borders made Sissy say that it was like the very heart of summer-time.

"A place to recollect and dream of on a November day," said Fothergill.

"Oh, don't talk of November now. I hate it."

"I don't want November, I assure you," he replied. "Why cannot this last for ever?"

"The weather?"

"Much more than the weather. Do you suppose I should only remember that it was a fine day?"

"What, the place too?" said Sissy. "It is beautiful, but I think you would soon get tired of Ashendale, Captain Fothergill."

"Do you?" he said in a low voice, looking at her with the eyes which seemed to draw hers to meet them. "Try me, and see which will be tired first." And, without giving her time to answer, he went on, "Couldn't you be content with Ashendale?"

"For always? I don't think I could. Not for all my life."

"Well, then, the perfect place is yet to find," said Fothergill. "And how charming it must be!"

"If one should ever find it!" said Sissy.

"One!" Fothergill looked at her again. "Not *one!* Won't you hope we may both find it?"

"Like the people who hunted for the Earthly Paradise," said Sissy hurriedly. "Look, they are going to the ruins." And she hastened to join the others.

Latimer noticed that she evidently, and very properly, would not permit Fothergill to monopolise her, but seemed rather to avoid the fellow. To his surprise, however, he found that there was no better fortune for himself. Fothergill had brought a sailor cousin, a boy of nineteen, curly-haired, sunburnt, and merry, with a sailor's delight in flirtation and fun, and Archibald Carroll fixed his violent, though temporary, affections on Sissy, the moment he was introduced to her at the Priory. To Latimer's great disgust Sissy distinctly encouraged him, and the two went off together during the progress round the ruins. There were some old fish-ponds to be seen, with swans, and reeds, and water-lilies, and when they were tired of scrambling about the grey walls, there was a little copse hard by, the perfection of sylvan scenery on a small scale. The party speedily dispersed, rambling whither their fancy led them, and were seen no more till the hour which had been fixed for dinner. Mrs. Latimer, meanwhile, chose a space of level turf, superintended the unpacking of hampers, and when the wanderers came dropping in, by twos and threes, from all points of the compass, professing unbounded readiness to help in the preparations, there was nothing left for them to do. Among the latest were Sissy and her squire, a radiant pair. She was charmed with her saucy sailor boy, who had no serious intentions or hopes, who would most likely be gone on the morrow, and who asked nothing more than to be happy with her through that happy summer day. People and things were apt to grow perplexing and sad, when they came into her everyday life, but here was a holiday companion, arrived as unexpectedly as if he were created for her holiday, with no such thing as an afterthought about the whole affair.

Latimer sulked, but his rival smiled when the two young people arrived. For—thus argued Raymond Fothergill, with a vanity which was so calm, so clear, so certain, that it sounded like reason itself—it was not possible that Sissy Langton preferred Carroll to himself. Even had it been Latimer, or Hardwicke—but Carroll—no! Therefore she used the one cousin merely to avoid the other. But why did she wish to avoid him? He remembered her blushes, her shyness, the eyes that sank before his own, and he answered promptly that she feared him. He triumphed in the thought. He had contended against a gentle indifference on Sissy's part, till, having heard rumours of a bygone love affair, he had suspected the existence of an unacknowledged constancy. Then what did this fear mean? It was obviously the self-distrust of a heart unwilling to yield, clinging to its old loyalty, yet aware of a new weakness, seeking safety in flight, because unable to resist. Fothergill was conscious of power, and could wait with patience. (It would have been unreasonable to expect him to spend an equal amount of time and talent, in accounting for Miss Langton's equally evident avoidance of

young Latimer. Besides, that was a simple matter. He bored her, no doubt.)

When the business of eating and drinking was drawing to a close, little Edith Latimer, the youngest of the party, began to arrange a lapful of wild flowers, which she had brought back from her ramble. Hardwicke, who had helped her to collect them, handed them to her, one by one. A green tuft which he held up caught Sissy's eye.

"Why, Edie, what have you got there?" she said. "Is that maidenhair spleenwort? Where did you find it?"

"In a crack in the wall—there's a lot more," the child answered, and at the same moment Hardwicke said, "Shall I get you some?"

"No—I'll get some," exclaimed Archie, who was lying at Sissy's feet. "Miss Langton would rather I got it for her, I know."

Sissy arched her brows.

"She has so much more confidence in me," Archie explained. "Please give me a leaf of that stuff, Miss Latimer; I want to see what it's like."

"My confidence is rather misplaced, I'm afraid, if you don't know what you are going to look for."

"Not a bit misplaced. You know very well I shall have a sort of instinct which will take me straight to it."

"Dear me! It hasn't any smell, you know," said Sissy with perfect gravity.

"Oh, how cruel!" said Carroll. "Withering up my delicate feelings with thoughtless sarcasm! Smell—no! My what d'ye call it—sympathy—will tell me which it is. My heart will beat faster as I approach it. But I'll have that leaf all the same, please."

"And it might be as well to know where to look for it."

"We found it in the ruins—in the wall of the refectory," said Hardwicke.

Sissy looked doubtful, but Carroll exclaimed, "Oh I know! That's where the old fellows used to dine, isn't it? And had sermons read to them all the time!"

"What a bore!" some one suggested.

"Well, I don't know about that," said Archie. "Sermons always are awful bores, ain't they? But I don't think I should mind 'em so much if I might eat my dinner all the time." He stopped with a comical look of alarm. "I say—we haven't got any parsons here, have we?"

"No," said Fothergill, smiling. "We've brought the surgeon, in case of broken bones, but we've left the chaplain at home. So you may give us the full benefit of your opinions."

"I thought there wasn't one," Archie remarked, looking up at Sissy, "because nobody said grace. Or don't you ever say grace at a pic-nic?"

"I don't think you do," Sissy replied. "Unless it were a very Low Church pic-nic, perhaps. I don't know, I'm sure."

"Makes a difference being out of doors, I suppose," said Archie,

examining the little frond which Edith had given him. "And this is what you call maiden-hair?"

"What should you call it?"

"A libel!" he answered promptly. "Maiden-hair indeed! Why I can see some a thousand times prettier, quite close by. What can you want with this? *You* can't see the other, but I'll tell you what it's like. It's the most beautiful brown, with gold in it, and it grows in little ripples, and waves, and curls, and nothing ever was half so fine before, and it catches just the edge of a ray of sunshine—Oh, don't move your head!—and looks like a golden glory——"

"Dear me!" said Sissy. "Then I'm afraid it's very rough!"

—"And the least bit of it is worth a cartload of this green rubbish!'

"Ah! But you see it is very much harder to get."

"Of course it is," said Archie. "But exchange is no robbery, they say. Suppose I go and dig up some of this, don't you think—remembering that I'm a poor sailor boy, going to be banished from 'England, home, and beauty,' and that I shall most likely be drowned on my next voyage—don't you think——"

"I think that, on your own showing, you must get me at least a cartload of the other, before you have the face to finish that sentence."

"A cartload! I feel like a prince in a fairy tale. And what would you do with it all?"

"Well, I really hardly know what I should do with it."

"There now!" said Archie. "And I could tell you in a moment what I would do with mine, if you gave it me!"

"Oh, but I could tell you that!"

"Tell me, then."

"You would fold it up carefully in a neat little bit of paper, but you would not write anything on it, because you would not like it to look business-like. Besides you couldn't possibly forget. And a few months hence you will have lost your heart to some foreign young lady—I don't know where you are going—and you would find the little packet in your desk, and wonder who gave it to you."

"Oh, how little you know me!" Archie exclaimed, and sank back on the turf in a despairing attitude. But a moment later he began to laugh, and sat up again.

"There *was* a bit once," he said confidentially, "and for the life of me I couldn't think whose it could be. There were two or three girls I knew it couldn't possibly belong to, but that didn't help me very far. That lock of hair quite haunted me—see what it is to have such susceptible feelings! I used to look at it a dozen times a day, and I couldn't sleep at night for thinking of it. At last I said to myself, 'I don't care whose it is—she was a nice, dear girl anyhow, and I'm sure she wouldn't like to think that she bothered me in this way.' So I consigned it to a watery grave. I felt very melancholy when it went, I can tell you, and if my own hair had been a reasonable length, I'd have sent a bit of it

overboard with hers, just for company's sake. But I'd had a fever, and I was cropped like a convict, so I couldn't."

"You tell that little story very nicely," said Sissy when he paused. "Do you always mention it when you ask——"

"Why, no!" Archie exclaimed. "I thought *you* would take it as it was meant, as the greatest possible compliment to yourself. But I suppose it's my destiny to be misunderstood. Don't you see that I *couldn't* tell that to anyone, unless I were quite sure that she was so much higher, so altogether apart, that she never—never could get mixed up with anybody else in my mind!"

"She had better have some very particular sort of curliness in her hair too," said Sissy. "Don't you think it would be safer?"

"Oh, this is too much!" he exclaimed. "It's sport to you, evidently, but you don't consider that it's death to me. I say, come away, and we'll look for this green stuff."

Fothergill smiled, but Latimer's handsome face flushed. He had made a dozen attempts to supplant Carroll, and had been foiled by the laughing pair. What was the use of being a good-looking fellow of six and twenty, head of one of the county families, and owner of Latimer's Court and Ashendale, if he was to be set aside by a beggarly sailor-boy? What did Fothergill mean by bringing his poor relations dragging after him where they were not wanted? He sprang to his feet, and went away with long strides to make violent love to the farmer's rosy little daughter. He knew that he meant nothing at all, and that he was filling the poor child's head and heart with the vainest of hopes. He knew that he owed especial respect and consideration to the daughter of his tenant, a man who had dealt faithfully by him, and whose father and grandfather had held Ashendale under the Latimers. He felt that he was acting meanly, even while he kissed little Lucy, by the red wall where the apricots were ripening in the sun. And he had no overmastering passion for excuse—what did he care for little Lucy? He was doing wrong, and he was doing it *because* it was wrong. He was in a fiercely antagonistic mood, and, as he could not fight Fothergill and Carroll, he fought with his own sense of truth and honour, for want of a better foe. And Lucy, conscious of her rosy prettiness, stood shyly pulling the lavender heads, in a glad bewilderment of vanity, wonder, and delight, while Latimer's heart was full of jealous anger. If Sissy Langton could amuse herself, so could he.

But Sissy was too happily absorbed in her amusement to think of his. She had avoided him, as she had avoided Captain Fothergill, from a sense of danger. They were becoming too serious, too much in earnest, and she did not want to be serious. So she went gaily across the grass, laughing at Archie, because he would look on level ground for her maiden-hair spleenwort. They came to a small enclosure.

"Here you are!" said Carroll. "This is what somebody said was the refectory. It makes one feel quite sad and sentimental, only to think

what a lot of jolly dinners have been eaten here! And nothing left of it all!"

"That's your idea of sentiment, Mr. Carroll? It sounds to me as if you hadn't had enough to eat."

"Oh yes, I had plenty. But we ought to pledge each other in a cup of sack, or something of the kind. And a place like this ought at least to smell deliciously of roast and boiled. Instead of which it might as well be the chapel."

Sissy gazed up at the wall. "There's some maiden-hair! How was it I never saw it this morning? Surely we came along the top, and looked down into this place."

"No," said Archie. "That was the chapel we looked into. Didn't I say they were just alike?"

"Well, I can easily get up there," she said. "And you may stay down here if you like, and grow sentimental over the ghost of a dinner." And laughing, she darted up a steep ascent of turf, slackening her pace when she came to a rough heap of fallen stones.

Carroll was by her side directly, helping her. "Why, this is prettier than where we went this morning!" she said, when they reached the top; "you see the whole place better. But it's narrower, I think. This is the west wall, isn't it? Oh! Mr. Carroll, how much the sun has gone down already!"

"I wish I were Moses, or whoever it was, to make it stop," said the boy; "it would stay up there a good long time."

There was a black belt of shadow at the foot of the wall. Archie looked down as if to measure its breadth. A little tuft of green caught his eye, and stooping he pulled it from between the stones.

"Oh! how broken it is here! Doesn't it look as if a giant had taken a great bite out of it?" Sissy exclaimed, at the same moment that he called after her, "Is this right, Miss Langton?"

She turned her head, and for a second's space he saw her bright face, her laughing, parted lips. Then there was a terrible cry, stretched hands at which he snatched instinctively, but in vain, and a stone which slipped and fell heavily. He stumbled forward and recovered himself with an effort. There was blank space before him—and what below?

Archie Carroll half scrambled down by the help of the ivy, half slid, and reached the ground. Thus, at the risk of his life, he gained half a minute, and spent it in kneeling on the grass—a yard away from that which he dared not touch—saying pitifully, "Miss Langton, oh! won't you speak to me, Miss Langton?"

He was in the shadow, but looking across the enclosure he faced a broken doorway in the south-east corner. The ground sloped away a little, and the arch opened into the stainless blue. A sound of footsteps made Carroll look up, and through the archway came Raymond Fothergill. He had heard the cry, he had outrun the rest, and, even in his blank bewilderment of horror, Archie shrank back scared at his cousin's

aspect. His brows and moustache were black as night against the unnatural whiteness of his face, which was like bleached wax. His eyes were terrible. He seemed to reach the spot in an instant. Carroll saw his hands on the stone which had fallen, and lay—on her, O God!—or only on her dress?

Fothergill's features contracted in sudden agony, as he noted the horribly twisted position in which she lay; but he stooped without a moment's hesitation, and lifting her gently, laid her on the turf, resting her head upon his knee. There was a strange contrast between the tenderness with which he supported her, and the fierce anger of his face. Others of the party came rushing on the scene in dismay and horror.

"Water!" said Fothergill. "Where's Anderson?" (Anderson was the young doctor.) "Not here?"

"He went by the fish-ponds with Evelyn," cried Edith suddenly; "I saw him!" Hardwicke darted off.

"Curse him! Playing the fool when he's wanted more than he ever will be again. Mrs. Latimer!"

Edith rushed away to find her mother.

Some one brought water, and held it while Fothergill, with his disengaged hand, sprinkled the white face on his knee. Walter Latimer hurried round the corner. He held a pink rosebud, on which his fingers tightened unconsciously as he ran. Coming to the staring group, he stopped, aghast.

"Good God!" he panted, "what has happened?"

Fothergill dashed more water on the shut eyes and bright hair. Latimer looked from him to the others standing round. "What has happened?"

A hoarse voice spoke from the background, "She fell!" Archie Carroll had risen from his knees, and, lifting one hand above his head, he pointed to the wall. Suddenly he met Fothergill's eyes, and, with a half-smothered cry, he flung himself all along upon the grass, and hid his face.

"Fothergill! is she much hurt?" cried Latimer. "Is it serious?"

The other did not look up. "I cannot tell," he said, "but I believe she is killed."

Latimer uttered a cry. "No! no! For God's sake don't say that! It can't be!"

Fothergill made no answer. "It isn't possible!" said Walter. But his glance measured the height of the wall, and rested on the stones scattered thickly below. The words died on his lips.

"Is Anderson never coming?" said some one else. Another messenger hurried off. Latimer stood as if rooted to the ground, gazing after him. All at once he noticed the rose which he still held, and jerked it away with a movement as of horror.

The last runner returned. "Anderson and Hardwicke will be here directly; I saw them coming up the path from the fish-ponds. Here is Mrs. Latimer."

Edith ran through the archway first, eager and breathless. "Here is mamma!" she said, going straight to Raymond Fothergill with her tidings, and speaking softly as if Sissy were asleep. A little nod was his only answer, and the girl stood gazing with frightened eyes at the drooping head which he supported. Mrs. Latimer, Hardwicke, and Anderson all arrived together, and the group divided to make way for them. The first thing to be done was to carry Sissy to the farmhouse, and while they were arranging this, Edith felt two hands pressed lightly on her shoulders. She turned, and confronted Harry Hardwicke.

"Hush!" he said, "do not disturb them now; but when they have taken her to the house, if you hear anything said, tell them that I have gone for Dr. Grey, and as soon as I have sent him here, I shall go on for Mrs. Middleton. You understand?" he added, for the child was looking at him with her scared eyes, and had not spoken.

"Yes," she said, "I will tell them. Oh, Harry! will she die?"

"Not if anything you and I can do will save her—will she, Edith?" and Hardwicke ran off to the stables for his horse. A man was there who saddled it for him, and a rough farm-boy stood by, and saw how the gentleman, while he waited, stroked the next one—a lady's horse, a chestnut—and how presently he turned his face away, and laid his cheek for a moment against the chestnut's neck. The boy thought it was a rum go, and stood staring vacantly while Hardwicke galloped off on his terrible errand.

Meanwhile, they were carrying Sissy to the house. Fothergill was helping, of course. Latimer had stood by irresolutely, half afraid, yet secretly hoping for a word which would call him. But no one heeded him. Evelyn and Edith had hurried on to see that there was a bed on which she could be laid, and the sad little procession followed them at a short distance. The lookers-on straggled after it, an anxiously-whispering group; and, as the last passed through the ruined doorway, Archie Carroll lifted his head and glanced round. The wall, with its mosses and ivy, rose darkly above him—too terrible a presence to be faced alone. He sprang up, hurried out of the black belt of shadow, and fled across the turf. He never looked back till he stood under the arch, but halting there, within sight of his companions, he clasped a projection with one hand as if he were giddy, and, turning his head, gazed intently at the crest of the wall. Every broken edge, every tuft of feathery grass, every aspiring ivy spray, stood sharply out against the sunny blue. The breeze had gone down, and neither blade nor leaf stirred in the hot stillness of the air. There was the way by which they had gone up, there was the ruinous gap which Sissy had said was like a giant's bite. Archie's grasp tightened on the stone as he looked. He might well feel stunned and dizzy, gazing thus across the hideous gulf which parted him from the moment when he stood upon the wall, with Sissy Langton laughing by his side. Not till every detail was cruelly stamped upon his brain did he leave the spot.

By that time they had carried Sissy in. Little Lucy had been close by, her rosy face blanched with horror, and had looked appealingly at Latimer as he went past. She wanted a kind word or glance, but the innocent confiding look filled him with remorse and disgust. He would not meet it, he stared straight before him. Lucy was overcome by conflicting emotions, went off into hysterics, and her mother had to be called away from the room where she was helping Mrs. Latimer. Walter felt as if he could have strangled the pretty, foolish child, to whom he had been saying sweet things not half an hour before. The rose that he had gathered for her was fastened in her dress, and the pink bud that she had given him lay in its first freshness on the turf in the ruins.

Some of the party waited in the garden. Fothergill stood in the shadow of the porch, silent and a little apart. Archie Carroll came up the path, but no one spoke to him, and he went straight to his cousin. Leaning against the woodwork, he opened his lips to speak, but was obliged to stop and clear his throat, for the words would not come. "How is she?" he said at last.

"I don't know."

"Why do you look at me like that?" said the boy desperately.

Fothergill slightly changed his position, and the light fell more strongly on his face. "I don't ever want to look at you again!" he said, with quiet emphasis. "You've done mischief enough to last your lifetime, if you lived a thousand years."

"It wasn't my fault! Ray, it wasn't!"

"Whose then?" said Fothergill. "Possibly you think it would have happened if I had been there?"

"They said that wall——" the young fellow began.

"They didn't! No one told you to climb the most ruinous bit of the whole place. And she didn't even know where the refectory was."

Carroll groaned. "Don't, Ray; I can't bear it! I shall kill myself!"

"No, you won't!" said Fothergill. "You'll go safe home to your people at the Rectory. No more of this."

Archie hesitated, and then miserably dragged himself away. Fothergill retreated a little further into the porch, and was almost lost in the shadow. No tidings, good or evil, had come from the inner room where Sissy lay; but his state of mind was rather despairing than anxious. From the moment when he ran across the grass and saw her lying, a senseless heap, at the foot of the wall, he had felt assured that she was fatally injured. If he hoped at all it was an unconscious hope, a hope of which he never would be conscious until a cruel certainty killed it.

His dominant feeling was anger. He had cared for this girl, cared for her so much that he had been astonished at himself for so caring; and he felt that this love was the crown of his life. He did not for a moment doubt that he would have won her. He had triumphed in anticipation, but Death had stepped between them and baffled him, and now it was all over. Fothergill was as furious with Death as if it had been a rival who robbed him. He felt himself the sport of a power to

which he could offer no resistance, and the sense of helplessness was maddening. But his fury was of the white, intense, close-lipped kind. Though he had flung a bitter word or two at Archie, his quarrel was with Destiny. No matter who had decreed this thing, Raymond Fothergill was in fierce revolt.

And yet, through it all, he knew perfectly well that Sissy's death would hardly make any outward change in him. He was robbed of his best chance, but he did not pretend to himself that his heart was broken or that his life was over. Walter Latimer might fancy that kind of thing, but Fothergill knew that he should be much such a man as he had been before he met her, only somewhat lower, because he had so nearly been something higher and missed it. That was all.

Mrs. Latimer came for a few moments out of the hushed mystery of that inner room. The tidings ran through the expectant groups that Sissy had moved slightly, and had opened her eyes once; but there was little hopefulness in the news. She was terribly injured, that much was certain, but nothing more. Mrs. Latimer wanted her son. "Walter," she said, "you must go home and take the girls. Indeed you must! They cannot stay here, and I cannot send them back without you." Latimer refused, protested, yielded. "Mother," he said, as he turned to go, "you don't know——" His voice suddenly gave way.

"I do know—oh, my poor boy!" She passed quickly to where Evelyn stood, and told her that Walter had gone to order the horses. "I would rather you were all away before Mrs. Middleton comes," she said; "Henry Hardwicke has gone for her."

This departure was a signal to the rest. The groups melted away, and with sad farewells to one another, and awe-struck glances at the windows of the farmhouse, almost all the guests departed. The sound of wheels and horse-hoofs died away in the lanes, and all was very still. The bees hummed busily round the white lilies and the lavender, and on the warm turf of one of the narrow paths lay Archie Carroll.

He had a weight on heart and brain. There had been a moment all blue and sunny, the last of his happy life, when Sissy's laughing face looked back at him, and he was a light-hearted boy. Then had come a moment of horror and incredulous despair, and that black moment had hardened into eternity. Nightmare is hideous, and Archie's very life had become a nightmare. Of course he would get over it, like his cousin, though, unlike his cousin, he did not think so; and their different moods had their different bitterness. In days to come Carroll would enjoy his life once more, would be ready for a joke or an adventure, would dance the night through, would fall in love. This misery was a swift and terrible entrance into manhood, for he could never be a boy again. And the scar would be left though the wound would assuredly heal. But Archie, stumbling blindly through that awful pass, never thought that he should come again to the light of day; it was to him as the blackness of a hopeless hell.

The Eighteenth Century.

The Eighteenth Century, so near to us and yet so far from us, possesses this peculiar charm, that its proximity in point of time enables us to realise to ourselves habits of life, and modes of thought, almost as remote from our own as those of the Elizabethan age. What it requires the powerful imagination of the poet or the novelist to do for us in respect of the sixteenth century, that every man can do for himself in respect of the eighteenth. We can live as familiarly with the men of a hundred years ago as if we had known them ourselves; and yet we are sure that if by any miracle we could be thrown back among them for a day, their talk, their ideas, their very dress, would seem as strange to us as if they belonged to another world. Johnson at the Mitre Tavern, Cowper at the Olney Tea Table, Fox shooting partridges at Holkham, Pitt and Bentham playing chess at Bowood, Dr. Taylor and his sleek black horses, might almost be our own contemporaries. Thirty years ago the old tavern life of London still survived. Dinner hours in the country were still sufficiently early to admit of chess and cards being introduced in the evening. A few years earlier Lord Althorpe was still shooting partridges with pointers and setters over the ground trodden by Charles Fox. And numerous Doctor Taylors still survived among the clergy, though they had exchanged their bobwigs and coaches for the less clerical costume of cross-barred stiff ties and one-horse gigs. In the pictures we have hastily recalled, there is nothing strange or unfamiliar. Yet make these figures speak, let them once begin to talk of politics, or literature, or religion, or pleasure, or "society," and we find ourselves in a different world. When personal government by the sovereign was a recognised principle in politics; when the authority of Dr. Johnson was universally accepted in literature; when the Church of England was so supremely popular that the clergy could afford to take their ease and live pretty much like laymen; when the "quality" still frequented Vauxhall and Ranelagh; when ladies of title gave convivial suppers, and were exposed to the same kind of attentions from their inebriated guests as Marlow pays to Miss Hardcastle—it is difficult to believe that in many other respects life was pretty much the same as at the commencement of the present reign. The immense remoteness of such scenes and such ideas from our own experience was combined with the nearness of the two periods to each other in point of time; so much so that opinions and practice as unfamiliar to ourselves as those of a Strafford or a Rochester, were a matter of course

with men whom we seem to know as well as our grandfathers—forms a contrast which is perhaps without a parallel.

Till recent years the eighteenth century had a bad name among us. The Lake school had raised a prejudice against its literature. Reformers of every shade heaped abuse upon its politics. Moralists condemned its vices. The High Churchman of 1833 blotted it from his calendar. It was generally voted an unspiritual, "unideal," and materialistic age; when men had lost their hold on great principles, when faith had given way to sense, and theology to evidences. It was an age of coarse enjoyments, of beef and pudding, and port, and punch, and beer. Mr. Thackeray has remarked how fat people were in the eighteenth century. And it is quite true that in any family portrait gallery one may trace a marked difference between the faces of the eighteenth and the faces of the seventeenth century. But it was forgotten that the eighteenth century, if not an age of great thoughts, was pre-eminently an age of great deeds. In the eighteenth century constitutional government was established, and the British Empire was created. Political eloquence then reached its highest pitch; and there breathes through the language of British statesmen, in their intercourse with foreign States, that "calm pride," as Mr. Matthew Arnold has so well observed, which is peculiar to an age of aristocracy.

Mr. Thackeray, we think, was the first English man of letters who recognised the rich materials which the eighteenth century afforded for literary treatment. And in the *Virginians* and *Esmonde*, in the *Humourists* and the *Four Georges*, he has shown what good use he could make of them. Since then, George Eliot has given us pictures of provincial and rural life, which though they lie quite at the end of the last century, and partly in the beginning of the present one, are no doubt faithful representations of our country towns and villages any time during the reign of George the Third. Mr. Froude, in his *Short Essays on Great Subjects*, has two or three very striking papers on the condition of England during the same period, in which he claims for it the superiority over ourselves in many respects in which we have been accustomed to look down upon it from an infinite height of self-complacency. Still more lately Mr. Lecky and others have given us works of great learning and ability on the same subject; so that public interest in the eighteenth century is now thoroughly awakened, and we begin to see, with more clearness than before, what were its leading characteristics, and to appreciate the wheat among the tares, of which last, no doubt, it yielded an abundant crop.

In looking back upon the eighteenth century, one of the first things which strike us is the air of repose which breathes over it. It reminds one of the land of the lotus-eaters, "in which it seemed always afternoon." And this, too, in spite of an occasional rebellion, or a serious riot, which would startle us out of our propriety at the present day. But the eighteenth century took things very easily. George the Second was

rather frightened in 1745; a few Londoners left the city; and a few people in the country, Lord Eldon's mother among the number, got out of the direct line of the armies. But, on the whole, the irruption of the Highlanders seems to have been regarded with great indifference. And it is wonderful how shortly all record of it was forgotten. There are probably fewer local traditions of Prince Charles's advance into England than of any event in history of equal magnitude and interest. The fact is, nobody cared. It was an age in which nobody cared very much. And when the Highlanders retreated the wave closed over them, and left hardly a trace behind. The British public, again reminding us of the lotus-eaters, were in no mind to be startled out of their pleasant doze. They had had enough of action and of motion; they had gone through two revolutions, a religious and a civil one. There had been burning, and fighting, and exile, and confiscation, on and off, for two centuries. They had grown weary of these troubles, and of the principles by which they had been caused. They would fight no more for an idea; of that they were quite certain. And though, when a Spaniard or a Frenchman became troublesome, John Bull flared up for a moment to chastise him, he soon sank back again into his accustomed indolence, basking in the sunshine of domestic peace and prosperity, and venerating the institutions of the country as they enabled him to do so. It is the life of "Old Leisure," that inimitable portrait drawn by one of the greatest literary artists which the fair sex has produced in this country, which greets us everywhere in that happy time—*πρὶν ἐλθεῖν νίας Ἀχαίων*—before the French Revolution had made all the world eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and had brought death and democracy into the societies of Europe.

In spite of the one great question which must still have kept the minds of politicians unsettled during the first half of the eighteenth century, the repose of which we speak extended itself to the world of politics. Till we look more closely into the matter, we are puzzled to know what the Houses of Parliament could have found to talk about during the reign of the first two Georges. What, however, really gave life and meaning to the Parliamentary opposition of those days, was that old antagonism between land and trade which was the growth of the Revolution, and of which the ridiculous side is shown us in Addison's *Freeholder*, and the more reasonable one in Shelburne's *Autobiography*. The complaint was that by leaning exclusively on the trading class, the Government had created an artificial interest, through which they were enabled to override the natural interests of the country, and to defy the majority of the nation. Enough of feudalism still survived to make it generally believed that the landowners under the sovereign were the natural leaders of the people. And it is the fierce struggle for existence of this ancient principle, with the new political ideas then beginning to assert themselves, which is the key to much of the Parliamentary history of the period. The country gentlemen, then the really independent

party, had a second grievance also. They held that the new Parliamentary system was not constitutional. Lord Shelburne, who, for the age in which he lived, was what we should now call an advanced Liberal, constantly speaks of this system as a sham. The monarchy was only a convenient cloak for the real supremacy of a faction, and the dictatorship of a single minister. This, the country gentlemen contended, was not what they meant when they accepted the new dynasty. *Non hæc in fœdera veni*, said the Tory party. They were all staunchly monarchical, and they were now palmed off with a counterfeit. It would be foreign to the purpose of the present article to discuss the reasonableness or unreasonableness of these complaints. We are trying only to realise as closely as possible the Parliamentary life of the period, and what it was that gave reality and meaning to that Tory opposition, so much talked of and so little understood, which was led by Wyndham and inspired by Bolingbroke. We know better since the publication of Lord Shelburne's life what Sir William talked about to the Somersetshire squires when he assembled them round his table at Orchard Wyndham, or drank a glass of punch with them at the neighbouring bowling-green. "During the first twenty years of the reign of George II. there were three parties: first, the old Whigs, who entirely composed the administration; secondly, the discontented Whigs, who, one after another, quarrelled with Sir Robert Walpole and the main body; thirdly, the Tories, to whose character and principles sufficient justice has not been done, owing to the never-ceasing outcry of ministers in confounding them with the Jacobites; but, in fact, they were the landed interest of England, who desired to see an honourable, dignified government, conducted with order and due economy and due subordination, in opposition to the Whigs, who courted the mob in the first instance, and in the next the commercial interest."

These, then, were the real principles of opposition. The Whigs had exalted the trading interest at the expense of the land, and, by setting up a sham monarchy instead of a real one, had violated the spirit of the constitution. But, on the whole, it was an age of repose. Ministers had to undergo an annual baiting on the Germanising policy of the Court and on the increase of the national debt, the bugbear which afflicted our ancestors with a perpetual panic. But the outside political world was stirred hardly by a single ripple. Of legal or constitutional changes no serious sound was ever heard. When Walpole was asked by the Dissenters when the time would arrive for removing their disabilities, he answered—"Never." Now and then there was a murmur of Triennial Parliaments, and a whisper of Parliamentary Reform. But the aversion of the people to any further changes was too deeply rooted to permit of either question being seriously entertained, and established institutions slumbered on in absolute security. In spite of the parvenu trade, the peerage and the gentry were still the real governing powers in the country, and their supremacy was cheerfully accepted as one

of the eternal laws of nature. Mr. Lecky, in a very fine passage, sums up the advantages and disadvantages of aristocratic government, deciding in its favour by several lengths—if I may use such an expression. By the aristocracy, however, he seems to mean principally the nobility; and he is clearly of opinion that the oligarchical arrangements of the eighteenth century, against which the country party protested so long and so loudly, were a decided benefit to the nation. He thinks that, as far as they still exist, they are so still. But this is a political speculation upon which I am precluded from entering.

If we turn to the Church, we find her still regarded by ninety-nine-hundredths of the people as our great bulwark against Popery; and her external repose during this long period of time was even still more unruffled than the repose of the political world. It must not, however, be supposed that the apparent torpor of the eighteenth century was inconsistent with practical religion. Clarissa Harlowe, as Mr. Froude points out, found daily service in the London churches as easily as she could now; and Cowper found the same at Huntingdon in 1765. This was not the case in rural parishes, it is true; but George Eliot testifies to the truly religious spirit of the English farmers and peasantry seventy and eighty years ago: and what they were then we may reasonably conclude them to have been seventy and eighty years before. They had that kind of religiousness which springs from absolute belief in the doctrines of religion—and when it is said that the eighteenth century was not an age of faith, the statement can only be received with considerable reservation, and in reference to a sphere of thought far removed above the level even of the middle classes. Controversial theologians admitted that no doctrine could be authorised by faith which was not accepted by reason. But the great mass of the people knew nothing of such theories.

"To the masses of the English people," says Mr. Froude, "to the parishioners who gathered on Sunday into the churches, whose ideas were confined to the round of their common occupations, who never left their own neighbourhood, never saw a newspaper or read a book but the Bible and the *Pilgrim's Progress*, the main facts of the Gospel history were as indisputably true as the elementary laws of the universe. That Christ had risen from the dead was as true as that the sun had risen that morning. That they would themselves rise was as certain as that they would die, and as positively would one day be called to judgment for the good or ill they had done in life."

And as was their religious, so was their moral repose. No troublesome doubts, no distracting newspapers, found their way into those peaceful villages, where parson and squire, farmer and labourer, made up a little community by themselves, self-contained, self-governed, satisfied with themselves and with each other, and knowing nothing and caring nothing for the great world outside. The natural and "underived"

authority of the gentry and clergy was as unquestioned as the law which they administered, or the doctrines which they preached. One generation succeeded to another, but life continued just the same. The old man saw in his age the things which he had seen in his youth. That longing for confirmed tranquillity which Wordsworth speaks of as one of the strongest instincts of our nature, might then be satisfied. At the present day we never know how soon any of our old landmarks, be they customs, institutions, beliefs, or even the mere features of nature, may be ruthlessly demolished. We scarcely dare allow our affections to go out from us to twine themselves round any external object, for fear it should be suddenly torn up. To be afraid to love anything, for fear we should be obliged to mourn for it, is one form of human unhappiness for which heavy compensation of some kind is due to us at the hands of progress. The eighteenth century had little progress; but then it had little worry, and no doubt. The most ardent Ritualist nowadays, says the essayist already quoted, feels that the ground is hollow under him. The most ardent Conservative knows that institutions are everywhere on their trial, that authority is everywhere disputed, that subordination is everywhere derided. But to the men of the eighteenth century none of these disquieting elements presented themselves. Everything around them spoke of permanence, stability, and security; institutions were regarded as facts about which it was ridiculous to argue. It was not supposed possible that we could do without the Church and the Monarchy. There was a reality and solidity about men's convictions in those days which must have been a great source of moral and intellectual comfort. Happy they who lived in the præscientific age! Happy Old Leisure, sauntering by his garden wall, and picking the leaves off the apricots! Happy old vicar, smoking his pipe in peace, unvexed of Darwins and Colensos, scratching the head of his faithful old brown setter, with his old single-barrelled flint-and-steel in the corner by his side!

A good many words and phrases which were once held in high honour in the country have been turned into ridicule by the choicer religious spirits of our own time. Among these "the sober piety" of our ancestors has come in for its full share of laughter, and has been associated in people's minds with square, high-backed pews, fiddles and bassoons in the gallery, nasal responses pronounced by the clerk alone, and a good deal of sleeping during the sermon. Yet it is doubtful if more solid fruits were not borne by this uninteresting tree than are produced either by the fervour of Ritualism or the inspirations of "Humanity." Whether it is a fact or not that English work, for instance, has fallen off since the eighteenth century in thoroughness and honesty I do not undertake to say; but the affirmative has been widely maintained, without, as far as I know, provoking any serious contradiction, and has been acknowledged with regret by some of the warmest friends and admirers of the working classes. The evil, however, if it really exist, is not confined to them. Small traders of every description are charged with selling and construct-

ing articles which are not what they represent them to be; and that old English pride in a good piece of honest work which was once so general is said to be growing rarer and rarer. If so, I cannot imagine anything more calculated to make us doubtful of the superior religious earnestness of the present day. At all events, without proceeding any further with this comparison, I shall certainly claim for the eighteenth century its own fair share of earnestness both in religion and the duties of daily life.

And there is no doubt that in some other qualities which the general consent of mankind has till quite recent times esteemed highly beneficial to society, the eighteenth century was more largely endowed than its successor—I mean respect for law and constituted authority as such, and that kind of rational self-knowledge which recognises the facts of human nature, and not only sees nothing degrading in subordination, but accepts it as the one essential principle of all permanent political communities. This, too, is earnestness of its kind—a determination not to be turned away from facing realities by any flattering or sentimental theories which rest on no visible foundation. I hope I shall not be so far misunderstood as to be supposed to deny that there is any other kind of earnestness. There is the earnestness of inquiry and curiosity—the earnestness which seeks the law within the law. But there is also the earnestness which comes of a simple desire to perform our allotted duties under the system of things which we find to be in existence, and asks for no higher satisfaction than the consciousness of having been successful. I cannot help thinking that of this kind of earnestness there was rather more in the last century than there is in the present. The motto of Englishmen then was *Spartam nactus es, hanc orna.* And it was, I think, the mixture of this simple sense of duty with the coarser moral fibre of the period which produced such men as Clive and Hastings and many of our great Indian and colonial administrators, with whom their duty to their country was an all-sufficient motive of action and ample warrant for the means they might adopt in the discharge of it.

The coarseness of private manners was only one form of the general license which was the inevitable product of the Revolution. It was not till late in the eighteenth century that society began to recover from the moral shock occasioned by the rupture of old ties, the rejection of old sanctions, and the extinction of an old faith which followed that event. The ideal, romantic, or imaginative element—call it what you will—had been crushed out of Church and State with the expulsion of the Stuarts and the remodelling of our religious institutions on a rational basis. The inevitable result was an influx among the upper classes of both political and religious indifference, which, where it did not end in absolute scepticism, was wholly ineffectual against the temptations of the world and the flesh. The influence, in a word, of the English Revolution upon English morals was the influence of all revolutions upon all

morals in all ages of the world. Political infidelity is their first fruit, and social license their second. The effect in England was visible of course long before the final act of that great drama. But with that period we are not concerned. A change began to show itself after the middle of the century. We hear no more of such doings as went on with Queen Caroline's maids of honour; of such letters as may be found in the correspondence of Lady Suffolk. Political corruption began to wane, and, after one fresh outburst under Fox and Newcastle at the beginning of George the Third's reign, subsided for ever. Literature became purer, and *Tom Jones*, *Clarissa Harlowe*, and *Peregrine Pickle* gradually became impossibilities. Mr. Lecky has noticed, in a very interesting passage, the concurrent influence of Wesley and Lord Chatham in this purification of the atmosphere. To these names may be added those of Johnson and Cowper. Chatham in politics, Wesley in religion, and Johnson and Cowper in literature, were working for the same end. Chatham infused a wholly new tone into the language of public men. Wesley recalled society to some small consideration for its eternal welfare; and Johnson showed how a man of infinite humour, robust common sense, and of a strong animal nature, could be at the same time "the great moralist," the enthusiastic High Churchman, and the conscientious Christian. The influence of Cowper is to be traced rather in our literature than in our manners; and it must be confessed that down even to the French Revolution, manners, in spite of Wesley and in spite of Johnson, retained much of their original laxity. That awful crash sobered them in a moment. The English aristocracy began to be afraid of opinion; and Charles Fox dated the downfall of good-fellowship, and of really good conversation, which to be good must be fearless, from the same epoch. So late, however, as 1787, we find plenty of evidence that "society" had not lost its spirits. In March 1787 Sir Gilbert Elliot writes to his wife as follows:—"From the Opera I went to Mrs. Crewe's (to supper), where there was a large party and pleasant people among them—for example, Tom Pelham, Mundy, Mrs. Sheridan, Lady Palmerston, &c., &c.; besides all which were three young men so drunk as to puzzle the whole assembly. They were Orlando Bridgeman, Charles Greville, and a Mr. Gifford, who is lately come to a good estate of about 5,000*l.* a year, the whole of which he is in the act of spending in one or two years at most—and this without a grain of sense, without any fun to himself or entertainment to others. He never uttered a word, though as drunk as the other two, who were both riotous, and began at last to talk so plain that Lady Francis and Lady Palmerston fled from their side-table to ours, and Mrs. Sheridan would have followed them, but did not make her escape till her arms were black and blue, and her apron torn off."

And again, two months afterwards:—"I was last night at the masquerade at Vauxhall with the Palmerstons, the Culverdens, Miss Burney, Windham, Pelham, &c. I went in despair, as I always do on

such services; but it answered vastly well, and I was more amused than usual at such places. The buildings and decorations were really fine and well designed. No heat nor much cold; a great many people, but no crowd on account of the ground. A good supper, and a blackguardish company, with a dash of good company, and no riot while we stayed, which was past three o'clock; but the Vauxhall *squeak* was just heard, and people were becoming very *tender* and very quarrelsome."

And in fact the extent to which society in those days lived out of doors and in public must have been a constant temptation to intrigue. Its masquerades, its Vauxhall Gardens, its Mrs. Cornely's, afforded every facility for assignations and adventures of every kind; and, if we may credit the *Gentleman's Magazine*, were sometimes made use of for the perpetration of criminal outrages. The miscellaneous character of the company, moreover, was anything but favourable to innocence; nuns from Drury Lane, and milkmaids from St. James's Square, mixing together with perfect freedom and equality. A further illustration of the laxity of tone at all events, which still prevailed in good society, may be seen in a letter written by Miss North to a female friend, and published in the Auckland memoirs, in which she regales her with the latest piece of scandal in a style as piquant as it is surprising.

One of the greatest social nuisances of the eighteenth century were the men servants. We all know the figure they make in the plays of that period; the impudent blackguards whom any gentleman at the present day would kick downstairs before they had been five minutes in his company. These are doubtless exaggerations; but the fact was, that in the fashionable world at that time, a servant was under little more obligation to be civil to his master, than a cabman is now to be civil to his fare. He lived by society, more than by any individual member of it. His real wages were the vails which were paid him by his master's friends; and a place was then good or bad, not according to the character of the employer, the amount of work which he required, or the money remuneration which he paid, but according to the number and quality of his company. This system naturally led to servants being kept in great numbers. In the *Constant Couple* we find a widow lady and her daughter, of good position, but not particularly rich, with four footmen in the house. They formed a society of their own, with their own rights and privileges, and could be as troublesome on occasion as the 'prentices of London were a century before. They had the right of free admission to the upper gallery of the theatre. And when their riotous behaviour made it necessary to expel them, in the year 1737, it was not done till five-and-twenty persons had been seriously injured. As they lived principally on board wages, they had their own clubs and taverns, as indeed they have now, where they swore, drank, and gambled like their betters. Of the grievous burden which the system of vails entailed upon the poorer class of visitors, when money was worth nearly double what it is now, innumerable anecdotes remain. Of these the most amusing is

of Steele and Bishop Hoadly visiting the Duke of Marlborough, when, on taking their departure through lines of rich liveries, Steele found he had not got money enough for the whole number, and made the servants a speech instead, complimenting them on their critical powers, and inviting them all gratis to Drury Lane Theatre to whatever play they might choose to bespeak. The worst of it was, that guests were expected to fee all the servants in the house, from the highest to the lowest; and Mr. Roberts has preserved a table of vails kept by one of the Burrell family, in which the gardeners, under-gardeners, under-cook, errand-boy, and nurse figure with the chief domestics. The nuisance, however, was very tenacious of life, and is not dead yet. In fact, among one class of country servants, namely gamekeepers, it is hardly, if at all, abated.

Before quitting London for the country, as the Londoners themselves always did in the month of May, I may glance briefly at the literature of the age of which London was the centre. We all know Macaulay's picture of the degraded condition of literature between the disappearance of the patron and the formation of a reading public, a period of time which may be said to extend from about 1720 to 1780. De Quincey, while denying that men of letters were worse off pecuniarily during this period than either before or since, declares that it was then that literature, "from being the noblest of professions, became a trade." He attributes the change to "expanding politics, expanding partisanship, and expanding journalism, which called into the field of literature an inferior class of labourers." This remark seems much too sweeping; and a better account is to be found in De Quincey's own remarks on the influence of novels upon literature. Politics and journalism have no doubt a tendency to debase literature, because, by using it as an instrument, they are compelled to recognise mediocrity. When political writing becomes one of the necessaries of society, like medicine or law, we must take what we can get; the very best, if possible; if not, what is possible. But then, on the other hand, in political writing there is always scope for the very highest literary ability. In this country alone, take Swift, Bolingbroke, Chesterfield, Burke, and Junius, and consider what standards of political and periodical writing they have established, and we shall hardly say that the influence upon literature of "an expanding partisanship and expanding politics" has been wholly bad. With novels the reverse is the case. Journalism, if injurious to the dignity of literature, is favourable to the cultivation of style. Of fiction, on the other hand, if worthier to be called a fine art, the tendency is rather to neglect form. And, what is more, the popularity of fiction causes it to be chosen as a medium for the exposition of theories, which cannot fail to suffer in a literary sense from the atmosphere with which they are surrounded, though a larger number of readers may at the moment be secured for them. In the political and the religious novel of the present day, we see the system in operation. Yet who can doubt that the political principles recommended to us in *Coningsby* and *Sybil* could have been far more effectively presented in another shape? It

was a necessary part of the author's purpose to secure for these theories as wide a circulation as possible; and he very wisely, therefore, sacrificed literary effect to the attainment of a higher object. But that it *was* a sacrifice I shall always continue to think. To mix love, and pleasure, and racing, and hunting with a fine political dissertation, is like putting sugar into dry sherry. More people will like it. But the wine is ruined.

Now in the eighteenth century this system was unknown; Essay kept herself to herself. And nobody can regret that we did not have the *Thoughts on the French Revolution*, or the *Letter to a Noble Lord*, in the form of a three-volume novel. The humour, the wit, and the singular dramatic power displayed in Lord Beaconsfield's novels, make it difficult to wish that they had been anything but what they are; but, as a general principle, controversy and fiction are not well suited to each other. The comparative effect upon literature of novels and newspapers would make an excellent subject for a special essay; but I cannot carry the subject any further at present, except to add that as the expansion of fiction has been more mischievous to style than the expansion of journalism, literary style in consequence is one of the accomplishments in which the last century was superior to the present one. Lord Macaulay, I suppose, is our great master of style; but then in Lord Macaulay's style the influence of journalism is conspicuous. It is the style of Dr. Johnson taken down from its pedestal and adapted to everyday life—to the time and the comprehension of cursory and hurried readers. In the face of such a master, it would be wrong indeed to say that style is not studied at the present day. Macaulay, in fact, has founded a school. He has done for prose what Pope did in the last century for verse; and what he himself says of Pope's imitators, might be applied verbatim to his own. Nor is Lord Macaulay, of course, the only English writer of the nineteenth century who has cultivated style as Johnson and as Burke cultivated it: what is meant is, that it is no longer universally regarded as an integral part of literature which no man can neglect who aspires to literary fame. It is considered sufficient at the present day that an author should say what he has to say in an easy and perspicuous manner, without giving himself any trouble to choose the most felicitous expressions, to place each word where it will have the most weight, or to observe the order of thought in the construction of his sentences. Now, if the eighteenth-century men did not always do this, they at least acknowledged the obligation; and the whole prose literature of the century bears the impress of this recognition. You can hardly take up a book or an essay written by a man of any note during this period, without seeing that its composition has been carefully attended to. This was that "elegance" of which, in eighteenth-century criticism, we hear so much, but which nowadays has fallen into such utter disrepute, that to call a man an elegant writer is almost equivalent to laughing at him.

Nor can I help thinking, I confess, in spite of Macaulay and De Quincey, that literature, if not literary men, was held in higher esteem in the last century than it is in the present one. Has there been anyone in this century who has occupied the same position in English society as first Pope, and afterwards Dr. Johnson, occupied in the society of that? It was not merely Pope the poet, or Johnson the moralist, to whom the honour was paid; it was paid to each as the acknowledged chief and representative of English literature. Whether what some people call mere literature, and others pure literature, is considered worthy of any such homage at the present day, is at least a very doubtful point.

The condition into which the English universities were allowed to sink in the eighteenth century was not without its good side, and might be traceable in part to that respect for literature as an end in itself, and not as a means to something else, which university reformers are now endeavouring to revive. The theory still was that the university was an institution for original study and research; that young men went up to it for literary purposes alone and not for social ones; and, consequently, that they were to be left comparatively unfettered in their course of reading. Johnson, indeed, says that in his time they seldom read any books but such as were prescribed by their tutors; but still the understanding was that all alike came to read, and that compulsion in the shape of a test examination was consequently unnecessary. The tradition lingered at Oxford till the end of the century; and on the proposed introduction of the new system in the year 1800 it was objected to it, I believe, that it would destroy the independence and the leisure essential to a literary community, and that the yoke of education would prove as fatal to the spirit of learning as, according to the good old joke, marriage is to love. The answer to this was, that you could not kill that which was already dead; that the spirit of learning no longer breathed within its ancient haunts; and that as the university had no longer any claims to live at leisure, she must condescend to make herself useful. Whether Oxford and Cambridge in the eighteenth century really deserved these taunts may possibly be open to doubt. Gibbon's experience of Magdalen, and Lord Eldon's account of his own examination for his degree, have always been received as conclusive evidence on the subject; but Gibbon was a gentleman-commoner, and down to within a very recent date gentlemen-commoners had almost the same license as he had. Lord Eldon speaks only of the examination, and says nothing of the studies of the place. We see from Johnson that in 1730 lectures were pretty regularly given, that attendance on them was required; and that some pupils, at all events, took copious notes of what they heard, since Johnson himself used to go to Taylor at Christ Church to copy his notes of Mr. Bateman's lectures. From what we afterwards hear of Taylor, he does not seem to have been a man of exceptional intellectual activity; and we cannot therefore suppose that his industry was an exceptional case. The college exercises which seem to

have been handed about the university, kept up the spirit of emulation to a certain extent; and, on the whole, we should be disposed to think that there was a good deal of exaggeration in the accounts which have come down to us of college life in those days. The university no doubt, like many other things in the eighteenth century, was in a process of transition. She had ceased in great measure to be a metropolis of learning; she had not yet begun to be a metropolis of education. In this stage of her existence she presented, like the old Borough system, one of those practical anomalies which it is impossible to justify to the public either by the principles which they represent or the fruits which they occasionally produce. The university reformers of the present day seem disposed to allow that the educational machinery grafted on to the university at the beginning of the present century has not been without some of the bad effects which were then predicted from it; and political reformers may be found who say as much of the first Reform Bill. But in the case of all such anomalies as the two in question, the world at large is so much more sure of the evil than it is of the good, that when once called in question they are almost surely doomed. The principle seems up in the clouds, among the *τά μετέωρα πράγματα*, while the grievance is under our very noses. The results of the old system are not appreciated till they are missed, or it is thought that they will be just as attainable under the new one. At all events, there is no stopping people from interfering with any institution which has not something solid to show for itself. Principles are not sufficient.

The social life of the last century in the two universities must have been extremely remote from the experience of any living men. The coffee-house system seems then to have flourished in the university as much as it did in London. And it appears from Mr. Wordsworth's account that the residents had far greater liberty in such matters than they have now. Undergraduates appear to have spent their evenings at coffee-houses, and to have sneaked into college at one o'clock in the morning without rebuke. Johnson, it may be remembered, talks of drinking with a friend at an ale-house near Pembroke Gate; and Paley, we are told, at Cambridge always went after dinner to the coffee-house in Trumpington Street, and finished with supper at "Dockerell's."

But perhaps the most interesting and curious of all the features of old Oxford life was the Jacobitism which still lingered there within the memory of men who were alive twenty years ago. One such, at all events, used to be pointed out to us when the present writer was at Oxford, in the person of the President of Magdalen, the venerable Dr. Routh, who died in 1859 in the 100th year of his age. He, we were always told, had seen Dr. Johnson coming in and out of University College, and in the Magdalen common room had drunk to the king over the water. As Charles Edward did not die till 1788, and as we know that so late as 1770 the French Government had designs on foot for restoring him to the English throne, it is perfectly possible that the old

habit may have survived down to the time when Routh became a Fellow. Scott tells us that Sir Arthur Wardour continued to pray for the restoration of the Stuarts after the family was extinct; and, if so, English Jacobites may easily have continued to drink to it only ten years after it had been contemplated as an actual possibility. Still, to have gazed upon a man who had actually passed his glass over the water-bottle in honour of his exiled king always seems to me, when I look back upon it, more like a dream than a reality. At all events, the fact, if it be one, is only one more illustration of the remark with which I set out, namely, that one great attraction of the eighteenth century is its combined nearness to and remoteness from our own epoch. Mr. Lecky seems to think that Jacobitism disappeared from Oxford at a comparatively early period of the eighteenth century; but the custom of drinking "the king's health," at all events, flourished in full vigour down to as late a date as when that king was Charles the Third. An old Oxford friend has frequently assured me that his own great-uncle remembered the fellows of Balliol going down on their knees in the snow to drink the king's health, and putting a young nobleman under the pump who refused to join in the toast.

Passing from Oxford and Cambridge to provincial towns in general, we find a kind of life in the eighteenth century which has now almost wholly disappeared. In country towns in those days a better class of society resided; there was more leisure and consequently more society than there is now. In the winter time, the county families often took houses for the season in some adjoining town, where they could enjoy society without going a dozen miles across country through roads covered with snow or ploughed into ruts knee-deep. Theatres, baths, assemblies, and entertainments of every kind then gave life and light to many an old country town which is now almost like a catacomb. Then, too, when so many of the country gentlemen never left home all their lives, they dealt exclusively with country tradespeople, and thus created a market for goods of a superior description, which it is difficult to obtain now anywhere but in London. Then in all the principal county towns there were shops which in all essential accommodation could compete with the best in the metropolis. The proprietor attended in person, attired with scrupulous neatness, and waited behind the counter himself on his more valued customers. The streets were thronged with carriages, the inn-yards were full, and an air of substantial prosperity pervaded the whole place, which, in too many instances, railways have partially destroyed. By its patronage of local trade, the local aristocracy kept up its influence; and though every town, which was large enough to have two parties, was divided into Whig and Tory, a Radical would have been regarded everywhere with horror as a species of parricide. The mob, generally speaking, were Tories and Churchmen to the back-bone, and the predominant feeling almost everywhere was the one so charmingly satirised in *Janet's Repentance*. Into the life of our large

manufacturing towns some interesting glimpses are afforded us in the life of Crompton, the inventor of the mule. "The better class of the inhabitants for that time, and for the half-century following, had thus so much leisure time to dispose of, that habits of social intercourse were established, and a consequent courtesy of manners acquired, which, unfortunately, has not been in every case maintained. The theatre was a fashionable and well-frequented place of amusement, and dancing assemblies were frequent and well attended. The education afforded at the grammar-school was of a high order; indeed the fact that Ainsworth, the grammarian, to whom every English scholar owes a debt of gratitude, was himself educated and afterwards taught a school in Bolton, is sufficient evidence that polite literature was estimated at its proper value, and produced its legitimate fruit."

Thus both the minor aristocracy, who lived exclusively in the country, and the inhabitants of towns had in those days a life of their own more varied and sociable than anything which exists at present in the English provinces. The provincial stage was then an institution of importance. Provincial watering-places were ten times as numerous as they are at present; and shortly after the middle of the century sea-bathing was added to the list of amusements in which the country gentleman could participate. It was some time, however, before bathing machines were constructed; and when they were, people did not always understand the use of them. My readers may remember the misadventure of Matthew Bramble at Scarborough. The passion for sea-bathing, however, steadily increased, and, north, east, south, and west, little fishing-towns or small sea-ports became transformed into fashionable watering-places much to the disgust of the old inhabitants, who found the new-comers superior to themselves in station, and as these formed an exclusive society of their own, admission to which became an object of ambition to the local magnates, these were gradually withdrawn from their former associates, and the old social circle was destroyed. Before this time, high and low had been accustomed to meet together at the bar, the Fives Court, and the belfry, and to join in the amusements of cock-fighting and badger-baiting. "But when they strangers comed," said an old woman of ninety to Mr. Roberts,* "then the town was a-spoiled."

The country gentleman at home in the eighteenth century had quite as full a round of amusements as he has now. The bowling-green was then an institution in every country town of any magnitude, where both sexes met in the summer time, to dine, dance, and play at bowls. There seems to have been also a great deal of morning visiting as well among the gentlemen as the ladies. Lord Shelburne tells us that, in his time, in Wiltshire—that is about the beginning of George the Third's reign—when families called on each other, the gentlemen were shown into one room and the ladies into another. Wine and beer were immediately placed

* *Social History of Southern England.*

before the men, "who, when they had done, sent to tell the women." "Several of the best gentlemen, and members for the county," he says, "drunk nothing but beer." On this subject Mr. Roberts has collected some curious particulars. Towards the close of the last century ale or "strong beer," as it is still called in the western counties, a liquor quite different from London ale, was brought up in decanters marked with an oat, and drunk out of long glasses, after dinner, as wine is now. At some hunt dinners it was the fashion to drink thirteen toasts in strong beer, after which each man drank what he liked. There was a particularly strong beer called Dorset beer—"a foolish drink," as one gentleman calls it, in 1725, who had taken rather too much of it overnight, and felt stupid in consequence all the next day. It may have been this beer of which Edmund Smith drank to such excess that he died from the effects of it, in 1710.

Country life then seems on the whole to have been more sociable than it is now, though manners were much more coarse. But there was one taste which sprang up in the eighteenth century against which no such charge can be brought; that is the taste for landscape-gardening introduced by Kent and Bridgman, and patronised by Pope and Addison. This taste, however, did not spread beyond the higher aristocracy; and among the country gentlemen of modest fortunes ornamental gardening seems to have been very little practised. At the present day, when we come across one of these "ghostly halls of grey renown," now turned into farmhouses, which are so common in many parts of England, it is rare to find any traces of a flower-garden still remaining. We see the old fish-ponds, or the hollows where the fish-ponds were. We see large kitchen-gardens and orchards, and enclosures which were once deer-parks, but few or no traces of extensive pleasure-grounds.

What kind of life went on within these old halls when the men returned from hunting and shooting cannot be understood by taking any one account of country life which has been left to us by any single author. Sir Roger de Coverley, Squire Western, Squire Allworthy, Sir Charles Grandison, Sir Hildebrand Osbaldeston, Sir Everard Waverley, the foxhunters of Cowper and Thomson, no doubt possess elements of truth. That a country dinner party, and the long evening which followed it, was sometimes such as Thomson has described in his *Autumn*, may readily be believed; and, making large allowance for poetical exaggeration, we might accept the picture as a representative one of rural manners in general in the year 1750. The dinner is of the well-known kind—sirloins, pasties, puddings; the drink is ale, and the talk is of the day's sport. After dinner comes an interval of punch and strong beer, followed by whist or backgammon, during which some men smoke their pipes, while others have a romp with the young ladies. These frivolous diversions over, the business of the evening begins—

> The dry divan
> Close in firm circle, and set ardent in
> For serious drinking,

till all succumb to its effects but one man, and he the parson of the parish. In all this of course there is vast exaggeration; but no doubt Thomson may have seen something not very unlike it among the Warwickshire and Worcestershire squires when visiting his noble patrons. And if for romping we read dancing, and deduct a certain amount of inebriety, we have a picture before us which is probably not far from the truth. It is remarkable that in this well-known scene, exaggerated as it may be, we have direct evidence in refutation of another social theory on the subject of the Eighteenth Century, which Mr. Lecky has adopted with perhaps too little consideration. Here we find the vicar dining with the squire on perfectly equal terms, and seeing all his flock under the table. This is not the position of a humble and despised dependant, who leaves table with the cheese, and marries his patron's mistress. Mr. Lecky would say, perhaps, that he was speaking only of one class of the clergy, namely, domestic chaplains and the poorer class of curates. But he does not describe them as exceptions. The fact is, there were the same distinctions between the clergy in the eighteenth century as there are in the nineteenth. There were the sons of poor parents sent to college perhaps because they showed some turn for reading, but without either the interest or the ability to help them to a fellowship or a living, and who scrambled through life as best they could on very humble means, subject to all the mortifications of genteel poverty, and to all the indignities which an age less delicate than our own was sure to heap upon it. But there were, also, as there are now, the younger sons of the gentry, who succeeded to the family livings, the holders of college livings and chancellors' livings, all of whom mingled on equal terms with the country society, and took part in both its business and its pleasures. The town clergy, it is allowed, were men of learning and refinement, and generally respected by all parties; so that, after all, the unfavourable picture drawn of the whole body will apply only to a small class.

Whether we take the clergyman of real life, such as Johnson's friend, Dr. Taylor; the clergyman of satire, such as Thomson's "doctor of tremendous paunch," and Cowper's "plump convivial parson;" or the clergyman of fiction, such as Mr. Irwin and Mr. Gilfil, we see equally that the country rector or vicar of the eighteenth century was, *mutatis mutandis*, much what he was in the earlier part of the nineteenth. And the same social distinction which existed then between the two classes of the clergy does even now exist, in a less marked but not a less real form. Mr. Trollope knows this, and has described it too in *The Claverings* with perfect truth. The difference between Mr. Saul and Mr. Clavering is but the reflection of a real social difference, of which a perfect illustration may be found in the *Life of Jones of Nayland*. Mr. Froude's picture of the country vicar in the first quarter of the present century may be appealed to in confirmation of these remarks, since he was substantially the same man as his father and grandfather. "He

farmed his own glebe. He was a magistrate, and attended quarter sessions and petty sessions; and in remote districts, where there were no resident gentry of consequence, was the most effective guardian of the public peace. He affected neither austerity nor singularity. He rode, shot, hunted, and ate like other people; occasionally, when there was no one else to take the work upon him, he kept the hounds. In dress and habit he was simply a superior small country gentleman, very far from immaculate; but, taken altogether, a wholesome and solid member of practical English life."

It is a mistake, therefore, to suppose that the country clergy of the eighteenth century were socially inferior to the country clergy of the nineteenth. The reverse is nearer to the truth. They were eminently "unclerical" in their habits. Sometimes they were sensual and slothful. The few among them who had any taste for reading were scholars rather than divines, and preferred Euripides to Chrysostom. But they held their own in society, and were just as much gentlemen as they are now; while I confess I am disposed to think, with Mr. Froude, that they had more influence with their parishioners than the present race of clergymen, zealous and ascetic as they may be.

If, finally, we turn to the farmers and the peasantry of the middle of the last century, we shall have no difficulty in pronouncing its social condition superior to our own. The farmers lived in a homelier and more frugal manner, but they lived in comfort, and were strangers to social discontent. Game was not then preserved as it is now; and Gilbert White thought him a very unreasonable sportsman who killed twenty brace of partridges in a day. Shooting, probably, was seldom or never let over the tenant's head. His landlord was generally resident, and the farm descended in the same families for generations. Witness the old song:—

> The farm which I hold on your honour's estate
> Is the same which my grandfather tilled.

There was no grumbling at the game laws in those days, for nobody was injured by them. There was no demand for tenant right, for the farmers were contented with their own position, and it never occurred to them to ask for any share of the proprietorship. Nor was there any dissatisfaction with the tenure of land in general, as the possession of it was more generally diffused, and it was less coveted than it is now, either as a commercial investment or an ἄγαλμα πλοῦτου. Towards the close of the century, however, a change began. The nabob came into existence. The duke and the marquis were not to be outshone by him; and the process of buying out the smaller gentry began in earnest. Society in general became more ostentatious, and the change, according to Cowper, found its way into farmhouses. But the change was very gradual. And thirty years ago, the old type of farmer still survived in sufficient numbers for middle-aged men to have formed a pretty accurate conception of what he was a hundred years ago.

On the condition of the peasantry it is unnecessary to dilate at much length. The enclosure of the wastes and commons did not begin on any large scale till the last quarter of the century. And we have only to compare the rate of wages with the price of provisions in the reign of George the Second, to see that the ordinary day-labourer was better off than he was at any time between the close of the American War and the great rise in wages which has taken place within the last few years. In his habits he was honest, industrious, and temperate. He had elbow-room in his native village, a roomy cottage, a good garden, and the common for his pigs and geese. The village public-house was comparatively unknown. The church was well attended; and as group after group of men approached the church-porch on Sunday they would be seen to stoop down to untie the strings of their knee-breeches that they might kneel down properly in church. As the century drew to a close, however, the circumstances of the peasant changed. And if we look at Crabbe's account of him we shall see the approach of those conditions which in another generation caused him to become a bye-word.

Such was the eighteenth century as I love to depict it to myself: a century not overburdened with delicacy or scrupulousness of any kind; but bluff, hale, and hearty, a century of great moral and mental tranquillity, of some coarseness and animalism, and of unruffled religious belief among the great masses of the people; a century in which the landmarks were not removed, and abuses were allowed to spread in picturesque luxuriance over all our most venerable institutions; a century, nevertheless, of great men and great deeds, in which England rose to a predominant place among the nations of the world, and fitted herself to perform the great part which Providence had in store for her as the saviour of the liberties of Europe.

T. E. KEBBEL.

The Undefinable in Art.

All of us, probably, have learnt to distinguish between the type of man who loves clear intellectual light before everything, and who derives pleasure from objects and ideas only so far as he defines and understands them, and the other type of man who delights to abandon himself to an unthinking emotional state, and to steep his mind, so to speak, in a stream of vague feeling. This contrast meets us in various regions of life. For example: social intercourse is to some simply an opportunity of exchanging clear ideas, and sharing in sentiments which repose on definite convictions. For another class, converse with others owes its value to the opportunity it affords for indulging in vague emotions. Such persons love society only so far as it provides them with the contagion of half-expressed feeling, the delicious thrills of sympathetic emotion, and the exhilarating expansion of soaring with a kindred spirit into the dim regions of poetic fancy. The same contrast presents itself in relation to nature. There is on one side the curious enquiring and scientific attitude of mind, and on the other side the dreamily contemplative and the emotional attitude. To the first, nature is a mine of facts and truths; to the other, a wellspring of vague emotional consciousness.

The lover of art might be supposed to belong altogether to the second group. Yet, though all æsthetic taste involves some emotional sensibility, there is within the limits of the class sharing in this capacity a clearly marked distinction between the intellectual and the emotional cultivators of the beautiful. The former are mainly concerned with clarifying their æsthetic impressions, with apprehending the sources of pleasure in nature and art; the latter live rather to enjoy beauty without understanding it, and to have the delights of art with the least admixture of definite thought.

It is commonly supposed that what is known as æsthetic culture tends to elevate the intellectual at the expense of the emotional. The education of taste, it may be said, consists in the main in a development of the powers of attention, discrimination, and comparison. The very frequent use of the term connoisseur (*cognoscente*) for an artistically cultivated person seems to show that a refined taste in matters of art means a highly intellectualised taste. If so, however, it looks as if the higher æsthetic culture would tend to exclude the vague and indefinite emotional effects described just now. One might even urge that it is impossible for an æsthetically trained mind ever to suspend the intellectual functions in order to taste of the mysterious delights of the unthinking dreamer.

There is a measure of truth in these remarks; yet they do not accu-

rately represent the facts. Æsthetic culture does, no doubt, tend to make our enjoyment of art more intelligent; on the other hand, it no less certainly tends to deepen and widen our emotional capacity itself. Now the peculiar delight experienced in yielding oneself entirely to an indefinite emotional impression may be viewed as one mode of æsthetic pleasure in which culture enables us to share. Indeed, one might reason that the full measure of such vague emotional satisfaction has for its condition a certain degree of intellectual culture. For in its highest degrees this delight takes the form of a sense of the undefined and the mysterious, and this presupposes habits of reflection. A rude peasant is pleasurably moved by nature's works; but he does not reflect on the nature of the feelings thus awakened. It is only the reflective mind which consciously enjoys the mysterious aspects of things. As a matter of observation, too, minds of the highest artistic training frequently manifest a marked disposition to this mode of enjoyment. Contemporary English art, including painting and poetry, illustrates an impulse among some of the most cultivated lovers of art to make prominent this ingredient of the vague and undefined. Further, observation tells us that a susceptibility to these effects of art is not incompatible with a quick and vigorous intellectual appreciation. To name a single example, Robert Schumann, in the interesting papers reprinted from the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, and recently translated into English, shows us in a striking manner a happy combination of a love of intellectual light with a feeling for the obscure and the undefined in art.

It will be admitted, we think, that it is well to cultivate this capacity of vague emotional enjoyment, if it can be shown that intellectual comprehension in art has its limits, and that there is always a larger region of art-effect in which the pleasure must be of an undefined and unexplained nature. If art can be shown to yield modes of delight which are unsusceptible of being connected with definite ideas by reflection, a person will clearly be the loser if his desire for intellectual light is so supreme as to unfit him for those modes of enjoyment. It will be the object of this paper to show that art does produce impressions of this kind, and that, however highly developed the intellectual appreciation of beauty, there remains a wide margin of emotional effect which intellectual reflection cannot render definite. In other words, we shall try to establish this proposition,—that the control of the emotions by the intellect in art has its limits, and that in the delight of the connoisseur, no less truly than in that of the unreflective tyro, there blend innumerable elements which cannot be referred to definite objective sources.

In the first place, then, it is worth remarking that, even within the region of art-impression which intellectual reflection is able to render clear and precise, there is room for the realisation of a certain vague emotional effect. This looks at first sight paradoxical, no doubt, but it can be easily made intelligible. It is to be remembered that the process of reducing an impression received from a work of art to definite elements

cannot be completely performed in a single moment: it takes time. Our powers of attention are greatly limited, and we are unable to reflect distinctly in one act on more than a small area of impression. As a consequence of this, at any single moment our consciousness is made up of regions having very unequal degrees of illumination. One impression or feeling is reflected on, and so appears clear and distinct; but outside there are circles of consciousness, feelings, and thoughts, which are vague and undefined. Thus at any given moment the impression we receive from a work of art consists of clear and obscure feelings, which latter can only be made luminous in their turn at the expense of the former.

Let us illustrate this in the case of pictorial art, and let us take a picture which has attracted a good deal of notice of late—the Venus' Mirror of Mr. Burne Jones. When, for example, we are passing the eye over the several details—the gracefully set figures, the water with its soft reflections, the quiet landscape behind—we are at each successive moment elevating one impression or group of impressions after another into clear consciousness, while the rest fall back into the dim regions of the sub-conscious. Each ingredient—the illuminated and the unilluminated—is alike essential. When, for instance, we are deriving an intellectual satisfaction from some particular virgin-shape or gentle face, the many other pleasing elements of the picture contribute each a little rillet of undiscriminated emotion; and these obscure or "sub-conscious" currents of feeling serve to swell the impression of any single instant, making it full and deep. It is the same when we try to bring a number of details under some aspect of unity or harmony. If, for instance, in the picture alluded to, we attend to the delicious modulation of colour, or if, with certain admiring critics, we are able to derive an ineffable enjoyment from the dominant sentiment of the scene, in each case there coexists in our mind with the clear perception of this relation or phase an obscure undiscriminating sense of the many details which all help, according to their rank in the artist's scheme, to make the painting an embodiment of the beautiful and the fountain of a rich and varied delight.

It will be seen, then, that vague emotion is inseparable from every complex work of art. At no single moment is the whole of its charm clear and intelligible to us. We must be content at each instant to enjoy one portion, through the play of intellectual attention and comparison, while accepting the rest on trust, so to speak, knowing we are able in turn to bring it under the same illuminating influence. In this mode of enjoyment, intellect is fully occupied and amply gratified; on the other hand, the peculiar delight which belongs to the vague and mysterious is never wholly expelled from consciousness.

It is to be observed, further, that the development of art, so far from lessening this ingredient in art-pleasure, would rather seem to increase it. Higher works of art are distinguished from lower and elementary ones by being more complex, by having more numerous elements, also a larger number of uniting relations; in other words, a more intricate unity,

dominating a wider diversity. Now, though it is true that art-culture expands our capabilities of attention and comparison, so that we are able to embrace a larger number of details under a single aspect of unity, it is no less certain that the more complex a work of art, the larger must be the region of the obscure and undiscriminated at any single moment. If we contrast the state of mind of a child admiring a new doll, and that of an artist contemplating the Laocoon, we shall see that, while there is vastly more of intellectual activity in the former case than in the latter, there is also, in any given moment, a wider area of undetermined pleasure.

We may now turn to a second main ground of the vague in æsthetic impression. Not only is the intellectual reduction of the æsthetic material necessarily partial at each successive moment; it is altogether excluded from certain modes of art-enjoyment: that is to say, the element of the strange and mysterious does not disappear even when attention is turned to this particular quarter. After all, it is only a portion of our delight, which we are able to separate into distinct ingredients, and to refer to definite objects, relations, or ideas. In all our fuller and mingled enjoyments there seem to blend strange elements, which escape all our attempts to seize and to subject them to intellectual control. When, for example, we watch from some Alpine eminence the splendid miracle of a sunset, we are conscious of thrills of emotion which by no skill of reflection can we attach to definite perceptions or their attendant suggestions.

The truth is, that however keen and inquisitive our minds, however well disciplined our intellects, our power of taking apart the contents of our consciousness is always limited. We think, perhaps, that we resolve a feeling called forth by a beautiful picture or a pathetic poem into its ultimate elements; yet, on further reflection, we shall find that we never really effect such an exhaustive analysis.

In the first place, then, every beautiful object, whether of nature or of art, calls up a large number of pleasurable feelings. We roughly mark off portions of this effect, setting down one to sensuous impressions, another to relations of harmony and proportion, another to particular emotions, as wonder, love, and so on. Yet, if we carefully consider the matter, we must be aware that this process is never other than inexact. In the whole impression of a peaceful landscape, for example, we cannot be sure that we make an accurate and exhaustive analysis when we enumerate a few prominent features of the scene with their imaginative suggestions. On the contrary, we are always confident that we leave many sources of gratification undetected. The whole effect, further, seems to be something more than the sum of the separate elements, even supposing these to be ascertained. In the scene before us the pleasures of light, colour, and form, and of poetic suggestion partially blend and lose their distinct characters. In other words, the intermingling of these elements affects us differently from the elements experienced apart. Thus a complex object of art always con-

tains an unresolved factor, and so presents a mysterious side to our perceptions.

Let us now go a step further. We will suppose that the total impression of a work of art has been broken up by reflection into groups of elements emotional and sensuous. Yet even this division does not get rid of the element of mystery. Thus the emotional effects of art are by no means perfectly intelligible. Anyone who has accustomed himself to reflect on the feelings called forth by the beautiful, the sublime, the comic, and so on, must have learnt how impossible it is to make clear and definite all the separate sources of the pleasure. How strangely and inextricably, for example, do numerous pulsations of feeling mingle in the effects of humour! Who can define all the elements which co-operate to produce the peculiar charm of a figure like Don Quixote, or Mr. Carlyle's Teufelsdroeck? We can only lay the finger on a few points here and there which call forth merry laughter, gentle pity, and nascent admiration: we cannot say whence comes all the peculiar delight which such objects minister to our minds. It is the same with the effects of the sublime. When gazing on a chain of Alpine peaks motionless and charmed in the magical air, we feel ourselves strangely moved, being now lifted up with a sympathetic sense of large power and perfect freedom, now partially subdued by a recognition of the possible relations of this power to our own feeble forces. Yet in vain do we seek to refer to definite impressions and associated ideas all the thrills of emotion which combine in this effect.

Finally, we do not eliminate all mystery, even when we reach that part of æsthetic effect which best lends itself to a minutely discriminative attention, namely, sensuous impression. When listening to a complex orchestral movement with which we are pretty familiar, we seem to ourselves to be able to separate one mass of tones from another, and to refer the whole of the ear's delight to a number of simple impressions. In point of fact, however, this separation is always very rough and incomplete. The whole pleasure of an orchestral chord, with its richly varied "tone-colour," does not easily break up into a number of single sensations; the very combination of the elements seems to disguise and transform to some extent the characteristic effects of the single constituents. In other words, the value of the tone elements apart and in combination is not the same, and consequently discriminative reflection fails to define the whole effect. It is much the same with colours in combination.

This however is not all. Even when we have reached what we call the elements of sensation, our analysis is only a rough and proximate one. Recent science tells us that what appears to our consciousness an elementary sensation of tone or of colour is in reality compounded of simple sensuous elements. The pleasure of a rich full note from a reed instrument, or still better from a human voice, arises, according to Helmholtz, from a fusion of many partial tones, which the unpractised ear is unable to separate. To this circumstance Helmholtz refers a part of the mystery

of music. In tones there dimly reveal themselves to our consciousness a plurality of simpler sensations which blend with and disguise one another. The same authority tells us that our seemingly simple sensations of colour are never strictly elementary. It is true that we do not ordinarily feel anything mysterious in a pure "primary" colour, as scarlet or blue. Yet if the reader will carefully observe the effect produced by a rotating disc, with segments variously coloured, when its motion is not too rapid, he will probably find that a vague sense of a number of hues, blending in one result and colour, lends a peculiar charm to the impression. Hence it is not impossible certain intermediate colours, as orange and warm violet, owe a part of their æsthetic value to a faint consciousness of the elementary impressions which compose these tints.

We have hitherto been speaking of the feelings called forth by art only so far as they depend on impressions and ideas supposed to be now present to the mind. Regarded in this way, they involve an element of the mysterious, just because our power of analytic reflection is limited. That is to say, the elements of pleasure are too numerous, and mix too freely, for our minds to effect a complete separation of them. But there is a further obstacle to this process of separating and detecting the separate ingredients of art-pleasure. The impressions which objects produce on our minds are a growth of many past experiences. A quiet valley does not affect a young lad as it affects a middle-aged man. To the latter it presents ideal aspects and offers emotional suggestions which do not exist for the former. It faintly reminds him, among other things, of long days of toil, of renewed visions of repose from the fatiguing excitements of the world. Yet the thoughts thus called up are of the vaguest; and much of the emotional power of the associations which gather about objects with growing experience is wholly undefinable. A feeling is produced, but the mental image which would explain this feeling is irrecoverable. We are strangely moved by the first sight of a foreign city, reposing amidst sheltering hills, or by some passing effect of light and colour in our habitual surroundings, or by the tones of a strange voice; yet no distinct recollection accompanies the impression, and we are at a loss to explain this effect. In the case of all the more familiar classes of objects, there grow up innumerable associations which all serve to add to the emotional effect, though they do not rise into consciousness as definite ideas. The sky above us, the cool glade, the rounded hill, the murmuring shore—these and other objects acquire for the mature man a meaning which is too deep to be sounded by the intellectual line.

Not only do objects and groups of objects thus collect about them mysterious forces in relation to our emotions, but the various elementary qualities of objects acquire a deeper emotional significance with growing experience; and this is very frequently quite untranslatable into terms of definite ideas. To the cultivated adult visual forms and colours, also tones of various pitch and of special *timbre*, become invested with a full

deep charm,—yet a charm which cannot be clearly understood, since the innumerable associations which sustain it are lost to view.

Recent scientific speculation opens up a yet deeper ground for this element of the mysterious in the impressions produced by works of nature and art. According to the evolutionist's view of mental growth, our emotions are built up not only of our own individual experiences, but also of those of many generations of ancestors. Here all distinct recollection is plainly excluded. We cannot recall the experiences of our remote forefathers. If, as is said, the charm of landscape is in part to be referred to feelings which have been handed down from our savage ancestors delighting in the chase, this charm must, it is evident, present itself to us as something mysterious. Hence, perhaps, much of that unaccountable emotional effect which is produced in our minds by certain aspects of nature. In the fascination of the restless sea, of wild mountain and of dim wood, of rushing stream and of whispering tree, may there not lie concealed traces of countless experiences of countless generations of uncivilised man? This line of reflection serves, as our evolutionist teachers have pointed out, to account for the deeper unfathomable effects of music; since musical tones may be regarded as the urns, so to speak, which conserve the remains of myriads of utterances of sad and joyous human experience. So, too, the special effects of peculiar colours—the energy of red, the coolness of green, and the deep repose of blue—may rest in part on long-fixed associations. Thus, throughout the scale of æsthetic sensation and emotion, the influences of ancestral experience and of hereditary transmission may be at work, imparting elements of feeling for which the intellectual consciousness vainly tries to find definite objective sources.

Thus far we have been regarding the element of the mysterious in art as dependent on the limits of distinct attention and of analytic reflection. In these cases we feel the presence of something vague and undefined just because we are unable to refer the feelings of the moment to some well-defined objective impression or suggested idea. There is, however, another way in which this element enters into art. Certain modes of æsthetic pleasure directly depend on vague mental representation as their essential condition, and disappear as soon as reflection seeks to give exactness and definiteness to the ideas. This effect is abundantly illustrated in what is often marked off as the imaginative side of art. Let us just glance at one or two of its principal varieties.

In the first place, then, art affords us enjoyment by presenting to our minds subtle threads of similarity binding together things widely diverse in most of their attributes. The gratification in these cases reposes on a momentary apprehension of the point of analogy, and is at once disturbed and destroyed when we begin to reflect closely on the objects or events thus linked together. The most striking example of this effect is given us in poetic similes, including all epithets which are not, strictly speaking, appropriate to the objects to which they are applied,

but which bring them for an instant into affinity to other and heterogeneous objects, as "the moaning sea." In all such cases we look at the object through the veil which a transforming imagination throws over it, and the very essence of this imaginative pleasure is involved in keeping the mental representation obscure and undefined. It may be observed that the sense of the mysterious is fuller and intenser when the figurative expression is a new one, and connects things which we are not accustomed to view together. To speak of dawn as a rosy maiden does not strike us as strange, for we have long grown accustomed to the figure. On the other hand, a new and bold simile which brings unlike things together for the first time, as when Milton likens evening to a

Sad votarist in palmer's weeds,

impresses us as something mysterious. It is further to be noticed that the sense of mystery is much livelier when the poetic figure is not too carefully elaborated. Homer's minutely worked-out similes call up ideas with so much distinctness, that we lose the delicious sense of vagueness which belongs to the more fugitive comparisons of modern poetry.

This remark naturally leads to the reflection that poetry cannot supply this effect of vague suggestion in its deepest and intensest form. Words are always definite, and the images called up by them, even though shadowy and incomplete as wholes, have the particular aspect indicated by the term sharply defined. The suggestions of musical tones, on the other hand, are necessarily obscure, since these tones do not exactly answer to any natural impressions, and only suggest ideas through very rough resemblances. This circumstance helps to lend to music its peculiar depth of mystery. When listening to a quaint picturesque movement of Schumann, our mind's eye dimly recognises numerous affinities to natural sounds, as murmuring breeze, gurgling water-fall, children's laughter, and so on; yet no distinct images are called up, and our delight remains shrouded in a mist of obscure fancy.

The second main region of undefinable suggestion, and so of the sense of the mysterious in art, is that of imagination in its narrow sense. We refer to those effects of art which depend on a full play of fancy in the recipient of the impression. The artist, whether painter or poet, is said in many cases to leave something to the imagination; that is to say, he does not seek to make all parts of his artistic representation clear and definite, but leaves a territory of the undefined in which the spectator's or hearer's imagination may construct for itself. The novelist thus appeals to our imagination when he draws the veil over some scene of exquisite pathos or of preternatural delight. The painter does this too when he just suggests regions lying beyond that of his picture, into which our fancy may wander in dreamy mood. And, generally in so far as art presents its object incompletely, defining a portion only, and simply pointing to what lies beyond, it illustrates this mode of the mysterious.

This undefined region, left veiled for the imagination to penetrate,

includes more than might at first be supposed. It must be remembered that the objects which nature presents to us are themselves not always clearly definable. When we look away over a wide landscape, the remoter regions are but dimly perceived, and beyond them our imagination frames wholly invisible tracts. So, too, when we try to apprehend the events of the remoter periods of history, we do not distinctly seize the reality, but only reach a vague and fragmentary conception of the whole order of events. Thus the remote in space and in time always wears to our imagination a certain air of mystery. Not only so, all that is vast in its dimensions loses in definiteness. The huge mountain has a mystery which the tiny hillock wants, just because it presents a greater object to our perceptive faculties, and one which they cannot easily grasp in a single intuition. Still deeper is the mystery when the limits of the object are wholly undefined. Here we have a presentation of the infinite, which our imagination for ever seeks to compass, yet never succeeds in rendering definite. An opening in the evening clouds, discovering unfathomable depths of transparent air, makes such an appeal to our imagination. The long flux of years which the page of history, and still more that of geology, presents to us, affects us similarly. We vainly try to reduce all these magnitudes to terms of our definite and reproducible experiences.

Now art is able, in a number of ways, to represent these uncompassable magnitudes to our fancy. The painter loves to crown his picture with some opening into unmeasured space. Milton delights to unfold in dim outline the vast spaces which enfold the earth, including the towering heights of heaven and the deep abysses of hell. And the same poet knows how to stir our imaginations to lofty effort by passing in review vast and incalculable ages of time. Poetry is specially favoured in this respect, since it knows how to magnify every object and every quality by the use of a vague and emphatic vocabulary. By a single expression the poet can excite our imagination to energetic action. Whether it be distance in space or in time, or the magnitude of a physical or moral force, or the degree of a moral or æsthetic quality, his rich storehouse of terms enables him to present the object to our view with its outline blurred, so to speak, and its dimensions undefined. What a mysterious charm belongs to such words as "huge," "vasty," "fathomless," "immeasurable," "boundless," when appropriately employed!

It would be interesting to compare the different arts in respect of their capability of supplying the peculiar modes of vague delight here described. So far as this depends on the limits of simultaneous attention, and on the co-operation of secondary and sub-conscious currents of feeling, there will be a marked difference between the arts of coexistence and of succession; that is to say, the arts which appeal to the eye and those which address themselves to the ear. Poetry and music unfold their contents in a succession of impressions, and so far the whole of the

object is, little by little, brought under the control of a discriminating attention. Only in the case of the more complex chords of music is there a considerable simultaneous claim on attention. In the visual arts of painting and sculpture, on the other hand, a large number of details are presented in one and the same moment; and, though we may successively attend to particular features, there is always a large region of the vaguely discerned present to consciousness. In another respect, however, the arts of succession are less definite than those of coexistence, namely, in their general aspect as connected harmonious wholes. When we appreciate the harmonies of form and sentiment which dominate in a picture, we have all the terms of the relations present to us. The eye can rapidly pass and repass from one point to another, and so by frequent repetition make the perception of the whole distinct and clear. On the other hand, when we gather up the series of impressions left by a beautiful poem or musical composition, we have to trust to recollection for the details. The various elements which are to be combined as parts of a harmonious whole exist now only as half-blurred mental images, and hence our perceptions of form in these arts are never so clear and exact as in the arts of coexistence.

Let us now turn to the second ground of vagueness in the impressions of art, namely, the impossibility of reaching well-defined elements, whether sensations or ideas, by successive concentrations of attention. So far as the separation of the sensuous material in art-pleasure is concerned, there seems to be some little difference between the arts which employ visual and auditory impressions. We break up melodies into separate tones, yet these still seem to contain some further secret. On the other hand, colours do for the most part appear to consciousness as perfectly simple sensations.

A greater difference presents itself in relation to the depth of associated feelings. Colours do not for the most part stir the mysterious emotional currents which are set in motion by tones. A colour presents itself to our minds more as a well-defined object of perception, as a quality of external things to be discriminated and interpreted by the intellect. A tone, on the other hand, has far less of the intellectual and more of the emotional. We do not understand it, we rather feel it. The reason of this difference cannot fully be given here. It may be enough to say that musical tones are not, like colours, common accompaniments of the objects of the external world; that they have their nearest prototype in the natural sounds of the human voice, and that this circumstance serves to invest them with an emotional significance which is wanting to colours. It may be added that many verbal sounds and cadences employed in poetry share to some extent in these deep and undefinable emotional associations.

Finally, with respect to the scope for obscure and incomplete ideal representation, it would appear, also, that the arts of the ear surpass those of the eye. Visual forms and colours, if presented in the abstract—

that is, not as directly imitative of objects, as in decorative painting—do no doubt call up now and again vague ideas. Thus the moral ideas symbolised by the straight line or the circle, or by white, are examples of such vague suggestions. For the most part, however, particular arrangements of form and colour answer, roughly at least, to too many unlike objects of nature to suggest any particular ideas, however faintly. Thus the forms of architecture, excepting, perhaps, some details, as the Corinthian capital, do not suggest ideas to our minds, and hence the special definiteness of the impressions of this art. It is only when they are made more complex and special that they awaken ideas of objects, and in this case they become imitative, and so call up *definite* ideas. In contrast to these, musical tones and their combination do commonly tend to call up vague representations of objects or events. We feel, when under the spell of one of Chopin's Nocturnes, an irrepressible impulse to interpret the melody with its supporting harmonies, to make them representative of ideas. Yet the ideas thus sought after do not rise into luminous distinctness. We only very dimly perceive the meaning of the wandering melody; and it is this dim sense of an ideal background in music which helps to lend it its peculiar mystery. It may be added that poetry, though using a medium of definite signs, may, by help of certain sounds and cadences, share, in a humble measure, in this power of music to body forth in dim outline large and impressive ideal shapes.

It follows from what has just been said that music will surpass all other arts in presenting to the imagination a blank region to be filled up by its free constructions. The whole of music, when not defined by a union with language, may be said to answer to the occasional pauses and blanks of painting and poetry. As directly imitative arts, these have for the most part to control the imagination, and can only in an exceptional way leave it free space for spontaneous action. Music, on the other hand, seems to have as its common function just to touch the imagination with gentlest pressure on one side, leaving it unfettered as to the precise direction to be followed.

Yet we have seen that a part of the gratification of a freely-moving fancy depends on the representation of the vast, the unbounded, and the sublime, whether in space, time, or in force or degree. Here then, it would seem, the imitative arts must have an advantage. Painting nearly always affords us the sublime in space; sculpture (though inferior in this respect to architecture) may faintly image to our eye the vast and immeasurable in force. Poetry surpasses these, and, by means of its all-comprehensive system of verbal signs, presents to us in suggested forms all varieties of imposing magnitude. In contradistinction to these arts of imitation, music can only body forth the immense by becoming itself a vast magnitude. The protracted series of complex movements of many sounds which make up a modern symphony may thus be said to give us the sublime in space, time, and energy. Yet it may be doubted how far this effect is proper to music in the same sense in which it is proper to

architecture, whose materials are necessarily large and impressive magnitudes.

The result of this rapid examination of the effects of art in its various forms is, that it involves as an essential factor a certain amount of vague and undefinable emotion. Hence art will always have its mysterious side, and a full appreciation of art in all its parts will include a susceptibility of mind to this particular emotional effect. Accordingly a mind which cannot enjoy without perfectly comprehending the whence and the why of its delight, must, it would seem, be debarred from a portion of the pleasures of art.

We have so far said nothing as to the relative merits of the pleasure which is made definite by intellectual reflection, and that which defies such a process of illumination. In truth, it is difficult to compare the two modes of enjoyment. While such intellectual activity tends to destroy a certain charm which belongs to these undefined emotional effects, it adds a new gratification of its own. The question of the superiority of the one or of the other form of enjoyment may, as we have already remarked, best be referred to individual taste. Some minds of a highly intellectual order, and unequally developed in an emotional direction, will prefer those effects of art which lend themselves to clear definition; other minds, of an opposite order, will rather choose the opposite type of æsthetic effect. This difference will affect the person's relative appreciations of the several arts. Thus, the first type of mind will prefer music united to language to "absolute" music. Many persons, like Lessing, fail to enjoy instrumental music just because of its indefiniteness. Others, like Schumann, would regard all minute inquiries into the what and why of instrumental music as irrelevant. They prefer to keep its meaning screened, so to speak, from the rude light of day.

It is another question as to the proper range of this influence, both in art as a whole and in the several arts. It is plain, from what has been said, that this depends, to some extent, on the artist himself. Thus, for example, a musical composer may seek to render instrumental music minutely descriptive. On the other hand, a painter may lean to an obscure mode of presenting his subject. So, too, the poet may fall into the way of suggesting his scenes and events in shadowy outline, and of dwelling on those aspects of nature and of life which most deeply stir vague and undefinable emotions. Is it possible to lay down any rules as to the right management of this material of art?

No rigid maxims, we think, can be looked for here. A wide margin must clearly be allowed for differences of individual taste. All that can be safely said is, that the intellectual and the emotional have each their rights. On the one hand, culture tends, as has been remarked already, so to strengthen the intellectual impulses that a mode of enjoyment, from which clear apprehension of objects and ideas is wholly excluded, is unsatisfying and incomplete. On the other hand, art is not science: it aims primarily at an emotional, not an intellectual, result. Some of the

deepest feelings of pleasure are, as we have shown, afforded by objects and suggestions which leave the intellect comparatively inactive. Further, as we have seen, these modes of pleasure are not only compatible with intellectual culture; they even presuppose (at least in their highest degree) a certain measure of it. To this we may now add, that our modern culture adds to the value of this undefined emotional enjoyment. Accustomed as we are to the scientific attitude of mind, to regarding nature and life only as an object for intellectual comprehension, there is an exquisite sense of relief in abandoning ourselves for the nonce to the emotional attitude—to viewing nature and life through the dim medium of a fancy which gives to each object the form and colour most precious to our feeling. We may thus safely conclude that each mode of gratification has its rightful place in art.

More definite rules for artistic guidance may perhaps be found if we have to deal with special varieties of art. By considering the materials at the command of a particular art, and its varied possibilities, we may roughly ascertain the extent to which this factor is admissible. Thus, for example, it may be safely said that vague suggestion cannot be introduced into pictorial art to the same extent as into music. The eye desires clear and well-defined objects: it is the organ of perception *par excellence*, and it could never be long satisfied with misty "nocturnes" or with a dreamy symbolic type of art. Music, on the other hand, by making use of inarticulate sounds—that is to say, a necessarily vague mode of expression—is under no such obligation to meet the intellectual needs. Finally, poetry may be said to offer ample scope for each mode of pleasure. Its medium, verbal signs, allows of the most definite modes of presentation. On the other hand, it is capable of the widest and most various suggestion of the vague and incomplete sort. Hence we ask of the poet an equal satisfaction of intellect and of emotion, clear perception of fact and dreamy imagination of the unknown and the ideal. We are here reasoning that the special aim of an art must be inferred from its special capabilities. Thus, having found how far these vague modes of delight are capable of being produced by the several arts, we can roughly determine their proper functions in relation to this particular kind of emotional effect.

There is one relation of our subject about which a word or two may appropriately be said in conclusion. As we have had occasion to remark in passing, what is new in impressions and their groupings affects us with wonder and a sense of the mysterious; on the other hand, what is customary and familiar appears intelligible on this very ground. Thus, in musical art, certain sequences of harmony, and certain modulations of key, overawe us, so to speak, by their very strangeness; whereas more familiar arrangements seem comparatively clear and comprehensible. In the first case, we have the peculiar delight of the vague and mysterious; in the other, the quieter gratification of intellectual comprehension. If, as we have argued, each mode of delight is a proper effect of art, we

must ask how they may be combined. Every work of genius supplies the solution of this problem. It meets our intellectual needs by keeping within those general rules of form which in art answer to the uniformities of nature. On the other hand, in its originality it provides ample novelty of detail, and so unfolds to eye or ear the hidden and mysterious powers of art. If all artists were men of creative genius, there would be no question of the relative worth of fixed form and of novelty of combination. But unfortunately this is not so. Hence we find, on the one hand, those who are content to keep to rules of art without endeavouring to reach a new embodiment of beauty; on the other hand, those who recklessly strain themselves to invent some new wonder, no matter how formless. The first yield but the cool satisfaction of intellectual perception; the second impress and stir our minds for an instant to a sense of the strange and wonderful, but only to leave them permanently unsatisfied.

It is an interesting question, whether the development of art tends to narrow and even to annihilate the region of new creation. J. S. Mill tells us he was much troubled by the thought that musical combinations would some day be exhausted; and German pessimists affirm that original creation in art, as in science, is becoming rarer and rarer. On the other side, there are many who assert that, in the works of one living dramatic poet and musician, we have an absolutely new revelation of art. It certainly would be a sad reflection that at some future day the world would no longer be thrilled by the delicious wonder of a new development in art. Yet, even if this is to be so, the consequences may not be so dreary as one might at first suppose. By the time this apex of development is reached, the storehouse of art-works will, it may be presumed, have become full, and thus there will then be ample novel material for each successive generation of the lovers of art. Even now there is a wide field for elevating wonder in the works of art which we have been able to preserve from the past. It does not seem to be the most devoted friends of art who are wont to complain of its narrow limits.

Kirks, Ministers, and Manses.

In Scotland the clergy of the ancient faith showed the invariable excellence of their taste in the selection of sites for the monastic establishments. Their lines seem to have fallen to them in the very pleasantest spots, and in the most fertile country. They reared their abbey-stedes in some rich haugh by the river-side, where the cattle grazed up to their fetlocks in clover, or in some sheltered nook of the weather-beaten coast, whence, enjoying such sunshine as there was, they gazed out upon the glories of the ocean. When it pleased them, like the wizard sire of the Lady of Branksome, to pace their "cloistered halls" in "studious mood," they were soothed in their meditations by the murmur of the stream, or the breaking of the surf upon the beach. This sense of religious repose came the stronger on them for the turmoil that was raging unceasingly without their walls. So far, at least, as material or æsthetic enjoyment went, these were the halcyon days of the Church. Even now the romantically-inclined tourist may feel that he might do worse for himself than by constructing a summer lodge in the wilderness out of the magnificent fragments of Dryburgh or Melrose. Beautiful as these abbeys are in their decay, what must they have seemed by contrast in the days when feud, fire-raising, pillage, and slaughter were the every-day occupations of the surrounding gentry? A peaceable man could not help himself; he had to keep his paternal possessions by the strong hand, or pay mail to somebody who would relieve him of the duty. The fortalices of the lesser barons and lairds were built for strength and not for comfort. The very farmhouses were so many bartizaned peel-towers, where beasts could be penned on the lower floor, while the air and the light filtered in through loopholes. Even when stormed or abandoned, as was often the case, fire speedily spent itself on the massive masonry and ponderous iron gratings, and when their proprietors returned to them they were cheaply restored. The rude furniture or "plenishing" counted for little; all that suffered serious damage was the roof.

Very different was the lot of the early Churchmen who had their home in the stately convent hard by. The more lawless the times and the manners, the more snugly they feathered their nests; the blacker the atrocities of the incorrigible sinners they confessed, the more ample the incomings of the saintly confessors. Those who neither feared God nor regarded man, had still in the midst of their wildest excesses a shadowy horror of future retribution, and showed a grudging generosity

to the ministers of religion. The Church and the monks had their dues sooner or later, and the more habitually spiritual duties had been neglected, the heavier was the reckoning in the end. The priest, when he sat by the sinner's deathbed, could dictate his own terms of absolution; or, if the culprit fell impenitent on the battle-field, there were masses to be founded for the repose of his soul. Public opinion was imperative on that point. So acre was added to acre, and endowment to endowment, with occasionally a lordship or a barony thrown in. The Church was lavish of the gifts of its devotees, and prodigal in its patronage of art. It is still a mystery how in those troubled times it secured the services of those admirable artists whose names are forgotten, though their monuments remain. The tenants of the convents tilled their lands in peace when there were raiding and fire-raising all around them. Their sleek cows ruminated quietly under the shadow of the cross, when the staring-coated secular beasts were half-starving in impracticable morasses, if they had been saved from being driven off at the spear-point. There were always haunches and pasties for the refectory tables, for there was sanctuary for the persecuted deer within the bounds of conventual free-forestry. Butts of Bordeaux from the sunny Gascon vineyards were left to mellow undisturbed among the cobwebs in the spacious cellarage. The cowl and the frock passed the wearer scathless, while the knights and gentry were shifting for their living, and could seldom venture to ride beyond their marches without their armed jackmen at their backs. The monkish dignitaries clothed themselves in soft raiment, made themselves comfortable among the cushions in their easy-chairs, fared sumptuously every day, and fasted as if they had been making festival. Above all, the bearers of mitres and croziers exercised a great share of that civil supremacy which has always been the ambition of the clerical mind. The bishops and mitred abbots sat in the Parliament and the Privy Council, and having nearly a monopoly of the ready money that was so scarce, held their own with the Crown and the highest of the nobles.

Things have greatly changed in these respects since the blessed light of the Reformation broke through the clouds of mediæval superstition, though the Presbyterian divines had their turn of an ascendency which they exercised autocratically enough. The landowners have been reclaiming the wastes, and generally improving their properties. Rent-rolls have been swelling amazingly, especially during the last generation. Intelligent enterprise and scientific farming have got the better of a reluctant soil and an abominable climate. But the clergy have, perhaps, profited the least by the general advance in prosperity, and the laymen, enriched and enlightened, stand in different relations to the Church. Endowments have been ascertained and fixed by the law, relieving even the most devout attendants on Presbyterian ordinances within the pale of the Establishment of all voluntary responsibilities for the support of the priesthood. As matter of fact, almost all the larger landowners, with a great proportion of the lairds in comfortable circumstances, belong

to the Episcopalian communion. The "heritors," that is to say the proprietors in the parish, have to contribute the tithes that maintain the clergyman, and are inclined to regard him from the pecuniary point of view as their natural antagonist. He goes at intervals to the law courts to obtain a decree for their contributing more liberally, and the decree, almost as a matter of course, is contested. In the Scotch Establishment everybody is raised above poverty, but very few are exposed to the snare of riches. Here and there the glebe of a city charge has been parcelled out in valuable building lots. Now and then on the glebe of a county parish there are stone quarries near some profitable market, or possibly a deposit of minerals. But cases like these are altogether the exceptions. Unless a minister marry a woman with some money, he is often hard driven to make the two ends meet, and to fill the mouths of the hungry bairns who are pretty sure to swarm in a manse. He has little cash to spare for charity, although that is of the less consequence, that his parishioners for the most part are fairly well-to-do, and are almost invariably self-respecting and independent. The old and ailing may have to fall back on parochial relief, but as a rule it is considered highly discreditable to have your kinsfolk asking for alms.

But though the minister may have far fewer calls upon his purse than the English rector or vicar, although he is never constrained to provide a curate, whatever be the number of the souls in his cure, yet his anxieties must increase as his children grow up. It is his duty and his pride to give them a good education; to see that one of the sons at least is entered for the ministry, and to give them all a decent start for existence. He may be better off in his declining years, when they are in a position to help him in their turn, or when at all events he is released from the burden of helping them, but in almost every event he dies the poor man that he has lived. As he can only practise the most modest and homely hospitality, he is debarred in some measure from the society of his equals in education. Should there happen to be wealthy members in his flock, of course they entertain the minister in their houses. But as a rule, as we have said, the country gentlemen attend the English chapel in place of the kirk; and so they are apt either to ignore him altogether, or merely invite him occasionally with formal civility. Under these circumstances the Presbyterian Church is scarcely likely to be in favour with the worldly or ambitious. Or rather, in the cases where ambition is confounded with a "serious call" from above, it is the ambition of intelligent men in comparatively humble stations. Presentation to a living and a place in the pulpit mean moderate wealth and good social standing to the son of the small farmer or shopkeeper. But there is nothing in the worldly point of view to tempt the man of birth and connection, who may choose among other pursuits and professions, with the fair prospect of succeeding in life. There are no dignities, as there are few pecuniary prizes, with the exception of the degree of doctor of divinity, that is generously bestowed by the numerous universities; or

the crowning glory of Moderatorship of the Assembly, a distinction which is reserved for the "Fathers of the Church." We are very far from saying that there are no gentlemen among the Scotch clergy. Many of them are gentlemen in every sense of the word; while not a few, especially of late years, have made themselves almost illustrious as men of talent and culture wherever the English language is read; some have excellent middle-class connections. Still it is altogether the exception to find among them the sons of people in what is called "good society," or cadets of those long-descended county families, where the children are often poor enough and plentiful enough in all conscience.

The kirks that are scattered over the length of the land, and in double number since the memorable disruption, are so many staringly significant intimations of the simple spirit of the Presbyterian religion, and of the shrewd scrupulousness with which the heritors of parishes have taken care that its simplicity shall never be tampered with. The forefathers of the heritors built the kirks—the kirks of the Establishment, at least—and it is they who are made liable for keeping them in repair. So they have set their faces with stern consistency against any concessions to the æsthetic or ornamental. The people who knocked about the rich tracery of Melrose and Holyrood, who broke the emblazoned windows, smashed the graven images, wrecked the organs with the organ-lofts, and tore down the carved work in the choirs, would have shown themselves unworthy of this practical character had they resented the logical carrying out of their principles. We know that Sydney Smith calumniated the nation when he said that they were unsusceptible to humour; but we fear there is no denying that the ordinary Scotchman is singularly devoid of the perception of beauty. With all his respect for Scriptural precedent, he differs *in toto* from the sagacious King Solomon, who insisted on the impropriety of worshipping the Deity in any but the most sumptuous of temples. It is true that Solomon had housed himself magnificently, while the Scottish kirks scarcely suffer by comparison with the aspect of the Scottish villages and farmhouses.

The old abbeys and chapels excelled in charms of situation. The site of the kirk has almost invariably been decided by eminently practical considerations. It stands as near as possible to the centre of the parish, and for that there are sound and substantial reasons. When you may have to "travel," as it is expressively called, half a dozen of miles to divine service, half a mile more or less is a serious consideration, and outlying parishioners would have serious grievances if their neighbours were favoured at their expense. Then the land that is to be devoted to religious purposes must always fetch more or less in the market, and it would be sacrilegious wastefulness giving over fertile soil in a sheltered situation when stones or unkindly gravel would equally well answer the purpose. The church more often than not is perched upon a barren bank, exposed to all the breezes of heaven. There is just as "snug lying" in the churchyard as if you had placed it in the fat meadows

below; the only man who suffers is the sexton, and he is paid by the year and not by piecework. Trees of course can seldom flourish in so unkindly an exposure, and accordingly the sacred edifice stands out in all its natural nakedness. It is rarely indeed that it is even partially draped in ivy, and then that hardy plant has to "fleech" with the wind and struggle up as best it can, to the leeward. In fact, nothing short of a rank luxuriance of creepers could tone down those harsh, uncompromising features, and if there were venerable yews among the gravestones, they would appear altogether out of place. What you see is a bare, bleak, gaunt, barn-like building, with a dwarfed bit of a belfry at one end of the ridge of the roof. The cold whitewash on the walls within is only relieved by patches of weather-staining, if the short-sighted parsimony of the heritors has let the roof get out of repair. There is a regular row of windows on either side, probably fitted with square sashes and casements, but possibly lozenged and slightly vaulted. There is a single door with neither porch nor archway, and the churchyard is quite in keeping with the church. Generally speaking, "God's acre" is decently tended, and that is the most that can be said. There is a strongly-built dyke to keep off trespassers and wandering sheep and cattle. The crops of nettles are cut periodically, and now and then the grass is fed down by a few sheep turned in by the minister. The cottiers, farm-labourers, and paupers lie slumbering peacefully under swelling mounds of turf, enamelled by the bloom of buttercups and daisies. The farmers, with their families, repose respectably under heavy slabs of the stone of the country, engraved with the dates of their uneventful histories, and sometimes with appropriate texts or staves of hymns and paraphrases. There are the family burying-places of one or two lairds—massive mausoleums of masonry or solid enclosures with iron gratings. Let into the kirk walls are one or two tablets, sacred to the memory of long-departed ministers; and probably in a corner stands a roofless little building that recalls the feats of the Burkes and the Hares and the body-snatchers. Old people will tell you still how, in the days of their boyhood, a regular guard was mounted for many days over the corpse of the acquaintance they had committed to the dust. On the death of a popular laird his tenants and dependants eagerly volunteered for the duty: and dreary work it must have been in the depth of the winter, although supper and good store of whisky were provided to keep up the spirit of the watchers.

These churches seem cheerless enough to the stranger, and yet it is not difficult to realise the kindly sensations they stir in the breast of the seemingly self-contained parishioner. He was not married there, for marriages are celebrated in the houses; but it was there he was baptized himself, and it was thither that he has carried all his children to their christenings. Christening, by the way, is anything but a Scotch expression, and would lay you open at once to suspicions of heterodoxy. It is there his forefathers have been buried; it is there he has laid all the friends he has lost, and it is to it he looks as his own last resting-

place. He may have other than pleasant recollections of the place, but at all events the pleasant recollections predominate. It is rather between himself and his conscience how far he may have enjoyed the discourses, with their heads—divisions—subdivisions, to which he listened with so earnest a face, or through which he slumbered with almost as creditable decorum. But the churchyard wall was his Sabbath club, where in any case he could relax in congenial society. The Scotch may be strict Sabbath observers. They may set their faces pharisaically against exercise, and regard the whistling of anything but psalm-tunes as one of the sins that are barely to be forgiven. We remember how even Bailie Nicol Jarvie, though no extraordinary precisian, sat up yawning over good books till "it had 'chappit' twelve of the Sabbath," before overhauling his accounts with the house of Osbaldistone, and yet his, as the shorter Catechism has it, was a work both of necessity and mercy. The austere county "professor" will shrink from the scandal of profaning the sacred day by discussing secular matters in any shape. But in his transactions with his conscience there is a saving clause as to anything that passes on the Sabbath by the door of the church. There he may conscientiously speculate on the coming "harvest," and deplore the "soft" weather, or the effects of prolonged drought on the root crops. There he may open his ears to all the parish gossip, and even whisper over the parish scandals and the backslidings of his bosom friend. Of a fine summer morning in the warm sunshine you might see the rough fathers of the parish and its hamlets clustered in a row along the western dike, like the rooks that gather behind the plough in the furrow. Every man of them was dressed in his Sunday best; and so the current "cracks" went on till the appearance of the minister approaching from the manse broke up the out-of-door congregation. When he vanished into the vestry to don his gown and bands, the rustle of petticoats that had been disturbing the silence of the church, was drowned in the clatter of hob-nailed shoes, as each devout worshipper pounded onwards to his place, and slammed the door of the family pew behind him.

The interior of the kirk is as plain as its externals; the service as simple as its severe architecture. There is the pulpit of white-painted boards at the one end, with the precentor's box beneath it. At the base of that double superstructure is the great square pew, devoted to the use of those elders who may choose to sit apart in state. The elders constitute the minister's privy council; he is bound to consult with them on all affairs parochial. In close proximity to the elders' pew is that of the minister, where his fruitful wife sits surrounded by her sprouting olive branches. The rest of the seats are so many long narrow slips, constructed with rigid economy of space, for people can be packed all the closer when there is no kneeling. All the seats in the middle of the church are moveable; for on sacramental occasions they are cleared away bodily and converted into long parallel rows of boards and benches, along which the Communion elements are handed by the ministering

elders. The front pews in the galleries or lofts used to be appropriated to the rural aristocracy when there was an aristocracy to attend. The places of honour, facing the clergyman, were assigned of right to the principal heritor; those on either side were filled by the gentry, who came next to him in consequence, till they graduated down at either end to the "bonnet lairds" and gentlemen farmers. For long, alas! since prelatism has become fashionable, too many of these places of honour and dignity have never once been filled by their rightful possessors. The upper servants from the great houses—the "grieves," or farm bailiffs, the keepers and foresters, have been wearing out the tattered leather of the broken elbow chairs that bear the crest of the family carved upon their backs.

And the habit of church attendance, we fear, has been going out lately among farm labourers; at least, the subject of the spread of irreligion and the neglect of ordinances among that class has been brought up for lamentation and discussion at recent meetings of the General Assembly. But in former days, under penalty of social excommunication, everybody made a point of being present at divine worship. Not that any great pressure was needed; for, putting those higher reasons that were very general out of the question, the kirk-going was the event of the week that broke the monotony of their lives. Even in Highland parishes where the mountains and moorland had never been measured by mortal land-surveyor, keepers and outlying shepherds would come trudging most unconscionable distances, followed by their wives and their sturdier offspring. When they took the trouble to come so far, they looked for liberal measure from the pulpit, and accordingly the sermons and the prayers seemed proportioned to the distance travelled. A similar zeal was shown in the lowland districts, where there were macadamized roads and wheeled carriages. Out of consideration for the spiritual necessities of the case, a certain number of animals were condemned to the deprivation of their Sabbath rest. A knot of the neighbours would club for a cart. They laid on it the framework that converts it into a harvest wagon, filled it with trusses of clean straw, and crammed it with infirm old people and children. And in the old days there were picturesque gleams of brilliant colour to break the cold monotony of a Scottish landscape. The ancient women wore their scarlet cloaks or roquelaurs, and hid the grey of their venerable locks under the linen of the snowy "mutch." On the way to and from the kirk the sexes separated themselves, as in a Hebrew synagogue. The men trudged forward in broad black bands, thrown out in dark relief against the dusty road—their females following at a respectful distance behind. In the kirk, too, you were made conscious by more senses than that of sight of the ceremonial attention they paid to the Sunday. Your nostrils were filled with a penetrating odour of mustiness, the odour of broadcloth that had been extracted from the chests where it lay folded for six days out of the seven. And that in spite of the savour of the sweet old-fashioned herbs, of which all the good wives had

provided themselves with a bouquet. Instead of the mint and anise and cummin of the Jewish pharisees, you had the mint, and rue, and southernwood, which were cultivated freely in all the cottage gardens with a view to these strictly ecclesiastical purposes. Then while these old-world costumes were still in wear, the younger folks dressed decently and becomingly. Now the white cap and the scarlet cloak have disappeared with the beds of rue and southernwood; the bones of the worthy old women who used to wear them have mouldered into dust in the churchyards, while their spindles have been broken up for firewood. And the village "merchant" finds a profitable market for coarse imitation laces and flaunting artificial flowers; and blousy females buy bonnets in the "mode de Paris," and screen their weather-beaten complexions with parasols *à la* the Whitechapel Road.

The kirks are hideous—"it winna deny," as Bailie Jarvie, whom we have already referred to, might have remarked of them. But the manses are often mighty snug quarters, and charmingly situated too, considering the character of the country. There is the upland highland manse, lying well out of the wind in some deep lap of the heather-covered hills. It is true that it must be but a cheerless residence in winter, when the snow-drifts are heaped high round the doors, when the road has been blended into the moorland banks on either side, or is only to be traced by the tops of the posts that mark it. The worthy pastor may have his communications cut for days or weeks, receiving neither letters nor newspapers from the outer world. He has victualled his household for the prolonged blockade, and laid in store of groceries and salted meat like the castellan of some menaced fortress in the middle ages. But in summer his house is a pleasant spot enough, standing in its natural park and gardens, gay with the purple bloom of the heather, among the cheerful copses of silvery-stemmed birch-trees, and with the rushing stream that comes sweeping down the hollow breaking and flashing over the boulders in its bed. There is the Highland manse in the seaboard parish, sheltering under the sunny shores of the loch that winds out and in among the mountains to the bay where it loses itself in the Atlantic. There the minister keeps his carriage in the shape of his flat-bottomed boat that lies moored by the little jetty, and pleasant enough it is to go about his parochial duties on the water, when the loch is alive with divers and water-fowl, when the white pinions of the sea-birds are glistening in the sunshine overhead, and the flocks of curlews and waders are whistling and piping from the shingle.

The ordinary lowland manse seems more habitable and homelike at all seasons, though the surroundings are tame and the site less picturesque. The kirk stands out in its grim severity, a conspicuous landmark from all points. But although the manse may be only some couple of gunshots off, the homely bit of landscape that surrounds it seems rich and smiling by comparison. The swell of the ground behind breaks the winds from the north and east; and then comes a second screen in the group of ash-

trees, which are tenanted by a noisy colony of rooks. The house is plain, for the heritors' architect has cut down the cost as far as possible; but stones being plentiful, it is strong and weather-tight. The rain-storms that would soak through southern brickwork may beat in vain against the granite or freestone. There are no French windows opening upon the lawn; but there are substantial casements, with well-fitting sashes, that scarcely rattle in the wildest gales. There are no magnolias or wistarias festooning the walls; but very likely there are Ayrshire and Banksia roses, which mingle their white blossoms with the ivy leaves, and twist their tendrils through the gutters on the roof. And, by the way, there is no lawn for windows of any kind to open upon. But instead of it, beyond the broad gravel sweep, there is a steep descent of verdant turf, leading down to the well-kept vegetable beds. There is a wealth of fragrant sweetbrier hedges that are left to grow untrimmed, with a matted shrubbery of barberries and elder-bushes, and a profusion of good old-fashioned flowers—from hollyhocks and peony roses down to wallflowers and stocks. It is a bright spot in the summer, with the humming of the bees and the chirping of the grasshoppers; when the blackbirds and thrushes are singing merrily in the bushes, and the wood pigeons are cooing melodiously from the fir-trees. And under the shade of these firs, at the bottom of the garden, is the babbling burn, where the bairns go paddling barefooted in the shade, "guddling" for the tiny trout that lie under the banks and among the stones.

It will be seen that the manse is by no means an undesirable retreat for a man who may have been brought up in a farm steading, or in a commonplace and rather confined house in the street of a country town. There he can lighten the cares of the parish by recreating himself with rural pursuits, and establishing common secular interests with his parishioners, for he is life-tenant of so many acres of glebe. He has his work horse, or possibly a pair of them; he has his cows that supply milk to the nursery, and whose spare produce goes to the market in cheese. He has his pigs and his poultry, which may be extremely profitable. When it becomes necessary to pray for a cessation of the spring frosts, or for an abatement of the plague of rain and water which is driving his parishioners to despair in the harvest time, he prays with all the more fervour that he is profoundly interested himself. Having a very small margin to come and go upon, a "soft" season that mildews the oats and sets the sheaves sprouting when they are cut and in the "stooks," is a serious domestic calamity. Many ministers, and especially those of the older school, are at least as sound agriculturists as theologians; since they make a study of the literature of the subject, they can put their neighbours up to a wrinkle or two; and they are as sound judges of a sow or a heifer as Parson Trulliber himself. But should they chance to have been town-bred, or if they are engrossed in their spiritual duties, to the neglect of their temporal concerns, they fall very much into the hands of their prime minister. The "minister's man," in his own

estimation at least—ranks next to the minister in the parochial hierarchy. He holds his own with the precentor, who naturally prides himself on his vocal talents, and drapes himself in the glories of his robe of office. He reverences himself in paying respect to the elders, but he treats them all the same with a dash of superciliousness. It is a sight to see him of a Sunday, acting master of the ceremonies to his principal as he ushers him from the vestry to the pulpit, But whereas of a week-day and in his working-clothes, there is no mistaking the air of sanctimoniousness that curls up the corners of his nostrils, and makes him seem as if he had been swallowing peppermint, on the Sabbath, within the kirk, he assumes something of a pious swagger. For, in virtue of his office, he has become familiar with the sacred things that have a mysterious awe for the uninitiated. He has charge of the pewter vessels of the kirk, and knows he has the right of entry to the vestry and behind the inner veils of the tabernacle. Should his will be stronger than the minister's, in his dogmatic self-assumption he is a very hard master, and it is always "*ego et rex meus*," when he is transacting business with the humble parishioners. But it is fair to admit that he is loyal according to his light, and usually makes his employer's interest his own. He has his fixed ideas as to ploughing and sowing, from which he can only be swayed by humility and flattery; but very likely he works like a slave on the glebe and in the garden, and takes a personal pride in the returns he makes them yield.

The manse is in much the same relation to the mansion of the laird, as the English rectory-house to the Court or the Hall. It might be by no means very attractive to the southern eye; but the young probationer who was fortunate enough to get a presentation, finds himself all at once in clover. Its accommodations were luxury compared to the little garret in the university town in which he had been labouring hard for them since he was started at college with a bursary. Once domesticated in it, his first ambitions were realised—thenceforth the game was to be played on velvet. His kinsfolk, who had hitherto borne the burden of supporting him, began to regard him with marked respect. There was no telling to what dignities he might attain—possibly he might ripen into a "father of the church" and be chosen the president of its supreme council. The Scotch are a practical people—they know the worth of their money better than most. But they instinctively value blood and descent more than the mere accumulation of capital that has crowned a successful career, and perhaps they set still greater store by the spiritual ascendency conferred by ordination. So the country repeatedly experienced to its cost, when the preachers in the time of the Covenant and Cromwell's campaigns overruled the authority of the nobles, and sent their generals to certain defeat.

It was an anxious time for the young clergyman till he found himself placed and fairly provided for. Many a man who had started high in hopes, broke down when he was put through his paces in public;

became what was called "a stickit minister," and subsided into a parochial schoolmastership. The Scotch fancy for extempore preaching presented serious obstacles to a modest youth. He had to make his *début* before a most critical audience. Each head of a family was profoundly versed in the most abstruse tenets of the Calvinistic theology; every old woman was a judge of style, and had her peculiar prejudices as to delivery. A savoury discourse must not only have the root of the matter in it, but must appeal directly to the feelings and tastes of the audience. A first appearance on the pulpit boards—not to speak profanely—was a grand piece of religious dissipation for those who came to approve the preacher or condemn him. When the *débutant* had given out the text, there was a mighty clearing of throats and blowing of noses. Snuff-boxes were solemnly rapped and opened, nosegays of herbs were audibly smelt at. Look round the church where he would, he saw all eyes converging on his own. If his nerves were as strong as his memory, having committed his sermon to heart, he might hope to extricate himself with credit. But when his confidence forsook him or played him false, the odds were that he was overpowered in a rush of apprehension. He might have an opportunity of redeeming himself on some future occasion, but the *fama* of his breakdown would be bruited far and near, and he never would have so good a chance again.

In the good old days of patronage pure and simple, things were more simply and pleasantly managed. The livings were usually in the gift of the Crown, or of some considerable local magnate, who was little in the habit of attending the church. He had no strong personal concern in selecting an awakening preacher. If his *protégé* was decently moral, he had discharged his conscience comfortably. So the flock might be saddled with some Dominie Sampson who had become an encumbrance in his employer's household when his young charges were grown up; or the choice might fall on the son of a superannuated divine, who half claimed the reversion by right of descent. Later, however, when notions of non-intrusion came into vogue, the patrons compromised with the people by devising a peculiarly formidable ordeal. A "leat" was drawn out—a list containing the names of half-a-dozen or a dozen candidates. The aspirants were fairly pitted, preaching against each other on successive Sundays. The congregation discussed the discourses through the week; the members of the Kirk Session laid their heads together, and one youthful divine was made rich and happy, while the rest went away mortified and disappointed. Latterly, and of course altogether in the Free Church, the elections have been by popular vote. Sometimes "a harmonious call was moderated in"—a happy thing for the minister, who settled comfortably down among his appreciative parishioners. For when there is a difference of opinion, the protesting minority have the means of making themselves exceedingly unpleasant. They can fight their way through the successive church courts, Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly, for if they have substantial ground to show for their ob-

jections, the choice of the majority is cancelled. The range of possible objections is wide enough; not only doctrine, method, and delivery, but the personal habits, and possibly the appearance of the candidate, may be frankly criticised in the course of the inquiry. Witnesses are brought up to depose that they have not found his manner to edification. He has a thickness of articulation; he has a disturbing habit of shrugging the shoulders; or it may be more seriously objected that there is a lack of unction in his prayers, while his sermons are rather doctrinal than practical. It may be clearly demonstrated on cross-examination that the old lady who declared that she could not follow him had been troubled for the last dozen of years with a growing dulness of hearing; that she chose to have her seat by the door, in the recesses under the gallery, and that she was in the habit of using her hand as an ear-trumpet. As for the critics on the power of his prayer or the eloquence of his preaching, they are listened to patiently, but with no great favour. It is not in human nature for those professed theologians before whom the matter is being argued, to admire the system by which the breath of the people can make or unmake a minister. Rather than not, they would give a quiet slap in the face to the constituencies who have held their own futures in their hands. And when once the young clergyman is passed, and has his appointment confirmed, if needful, by the Courts of Appeal, so far he is safe. He holds his cure *ad vitam aut culpam*, and can only be removed if he gives cause of offence by sinning against either morals or orthodoxy. Of course, if he be ambitious either of fame or of a better income in a "broader sphere of Christian usefulness," which is the favourite euphuism for either of the former, then the whole matter of his qualifications may be reopened. The parish that "calls" him and the parish that is loth to part with him, set to tugging in opposite directions, and there is pulling of caps over the common favourite. Naturally the favourite suffers in the struggle. Generally he is permitted to go, since the objections to translating him must be strong indeed to justify forcing him to remain with a flock he has shown himself ready to abandon. The heartburnings he leaves behind may be of comparatively little consequence, but then he may be sure that anything that can be whispered to his disadvantage has heralded his arrival among his future parishioners.

When the young divine is fairly settled into his manse, and has cleared off the claims of his predecessor's widow and orphans on the stipend, the next thing is to think of a wife for himself. Matrimony is almost as much a matter of necessity to the minister as to the parish doctor; for the Scotch are distinctly a family people, and believe firmly in the duty of increasing and multiplying when Providence has provided the means. They are a prudent people too, and think all the more highly of their minister if he has not altogether neglected the main chance. It must needs be that the children will come, and there should be a certain provision for bringing them up creditably. So the minister—

"honest man"—lays himself out to seek for a helpmate, as he would hire a man to look after the glebe, and may be said to go a courting under the eyes of his parish. Necessarily the range of his choice is rather restricted. He has neither leisure nor many opportunities of going upon a quest in the cities, which he rarely visits except at the "sacrament seasons," or in attendance on the sittings of the Synod. He must do what he can for himself in the neighbouring market-town, or in the manses of his brethren within the bounds of his presbytery, or in the families of the farmers who are sitting at his feet. From the sentimental point of view, the temptation is strong to choose a spouse out of one of the manses. The daughter of a minister, born in the black, brought up under the wing of a mother in Israel, is more likely to prove a congenial spirit, to say nothing of having been broken to her future duties. There are pleasant opportunities, too, of paying his court—over the tea-kettle, or the steaming toddy, or the supper-table, in company where he would be sitting by preference in any case. But then the daughters of the manse are seldom tolerably "tochered;" for even if their mother has had money of her own, it scarcely counts when it comes to be infinitesimally divided. If the minister be self-possessed and worldly-wise, it is probable that he prefers to unite himself to the co-heiress of some wealthy farmer or flourishing cornfactor, or of a popular country doctor or solicitor. Then the lady's position may prove a trying one, and much of her husband's usefulness and comfort must depend on her tact and native good sense. *Ex officio* she claims a certain social pre-eminence, and presides over works of charity and mercy; while the clergymen's wives are inclined to look down upon her, and she is enviously regarded by her former intimates.

But the help she has brought to the housekeeping, if it be judiciously employed, may go far to counterbalance these inevitable drawbacks. Next to his clerical virtues, and the spirit of sympathy which chastens the feastings in the house of mirth, while it carries consolation into the house of mourning, the unpretending hospitality of the manse goes far to make the minister popular. There may be few formal entertainments. But the substantial parishioner who drops in on business is pressed to remain to dine, or, better still, for the more social supper. Suppers have always been an institution among the Scottish middle classes in the country and the town. The master of the house is a temperate man, but he utterly abhors total abstinence. If he has a snug balance at his banker's, and can afford to lie out of his money, there is sure to be some rare old Isla or Campbeltown or Talisker in his cellar. Experience has shown how smoothly business can be transacted over a smoking tumbler; the thin outer husk of Scottish reserve thaws with the genial warmth of the toddy, and host and guest, as they close in over their "cracks," wax more and more benevolent and cordial. If it is a question of wheedling out a subscription, the visitor insensibly slips his hold on the purse-strings, on which he ordinarily keeps the firmest of grips. Then the

minister's better half takes a pride in presiding over cheerful tea-gatherings, where the condescension she should know so well how to disguise, wins her the hearts of the wives of the farmers.

But the joviality specially characteristic of the manses is, or used to be, on occasion of the "preachings." The communion in the Scotch churches, especially in the towns, is administered now-a-days more frequently than formerly. Formerly it was considered that familiarity bred carelessness, and it was seldom celebrated more than twice in the year. These were great occasions both for pastors and people. The "sacrament Sunday" was preceded by a solemn fast day in the middle of the week, when labour was suspended and pleasure was forbidden. There were a couple of services in the kirk, and then there was a sermon besides on the Saturday, and another on the Monday. As for the Sabbath day itself, it was one prolonged spiritual festival, when the feeble flesh and blood must have succumbed had it not been borne up by spiritual exaltation. The day began with the ordinary service; then five or six "tables" were served in succession, when those boards we alluded to before were laid in long parallel lines, the length of the body of the church. There was a preliminary address styled "fencing the tables," which warned away the ungodly and profane. For each of the half-dozen successive batches of communicants, there were a couple of distinct exhortations, with the appropriate psalms and paraphrases. The whole was wound up with a final discourse; the worshippers were dismissed, and then, after a brief interval, all reassembled for service in the evening. It was a sore strain on the flock, and still more severe on their pastor. Of course he had to engage efficient assistance, and two or three of his brother clergymen undertook to assist him in his duties. Naturally the overstrained bows were in great need of unbending; and it became *de rigueur* to have a dinner by way of *gaudeamus* on the Monday after the sacred festival. The leading laymen and elders, a devout laird or two, and some well-to-do farmers were invited to meet the stranger ministers. The fatted calves were killed, and the poultry-yard and pigeon-house suffered. It was a point of pride to have plenty on the board, while the cookery must do credit to the mistress of the house. There was sure to be some bottles of sound old wine, such as makes glad the hearts of men. The party for the most part had met before on many a similar occasion, and although kept within the limits of becoming mirth, the dinner almost invariably went off most successfully. But when the cloth was drawn and the kettle was brought in, it was rumoured that the fun grew fast though not furious; for although the guests might keep the secrets of the banquet, the maids must have set scandals afloat had there been serious infringements of decorum.

It was a different thing, no doubt, with convivial clergymen of the old school. A generation or so before the disruption, in certain districts given over to moderatism, the standard of clerical morality was decidedly low. Parishioners who were anything but strait-laced, showed

themselves tolerant of the indiscretions of the pastors. Conviviality carried to excess was the vice of the time and the country. Time was when even prominent leaders of the Church thought no shame to patronise the drama like Carlyle, or even to turn playwright like Home; when ministers met lawyers and literary men at merry suppers in the taverns of the capital; when they would readily take a hand at whist, or give their countenance to balls or such carnal merry-makings. If one section of the Church cherished the austere traditions of the times of the Covenant, there was another that went to the opposite extreme, influenced in great measure by the spirit of opposition. There were many men who contented themselves with preaching a couple of the driest discourses of a Sabbath, and leaving their religion behind them with their gown in the vestry. Indeed, with the liberties they permitted themselves, they could not well tighten the curb on their parishioners. Then came a reaction, revivals, and a shaking of the dry bones. Zealous evangelists felt moved with compassion for the sheep who were in the custody of those careless shepherds. They made missionary raids and held open-air services, and their trespasses on the folds were bitterly resented. Some of the quiet-going old clergy were constrained to bestir themselves; hearers who had been contented hitherto to nod at their feet, began to grumble at their "cauldrife doctrine" and carnal self-seeking. They were not only jealously resentful of the interlopers, but piqued at having to preach to emptying pews. Probably in some instances their consciences might be awakened: in any case a new spirit of pastoral and polemical earnestness was infused into many who still styled themselves "moderates;" and the germs of the disruption that followed are to be sought not so much in patronage itself, or even in isolated cases of high-handed intrusion, as in the abuses which had gradually grown up under the system.

The Free Church of Scotland was a protest chiefly against that ultimate jurisdiction of the civil tribunals which clashed with the supreme spiritual authority of the clergy. But before the secession, and even now in the Establishment, there was one department of the Edinburgh Law Courts in which the clergy were profoundly interested. That was the Court of Teinds, which decided the appeals for augmentation of stipend. Admirers of the Waverley Novels will remember how worthy Mr. Blattergowl was always retaliating on the long-winded Antiquary by boring him anent teinds and augmentation. The subject is dull enough for anybody, but nothing could possibly sound more unwelcome to the ears of such a heritor as the laird of Monkbarns. The minister's income, independent of what he draws from the glebe, is measured by so many "chalders of victual," or quantities of grain contributed by the landowners. The assessment is seldom extravagant, considering the inevitable outgoings of the clergyman's position, and it has been the practice of the Teind Court, the members of which have generally a fellow-feeling with brother proprietors, to be suspiciously critical on propositions for increasing it. The *onus* of

proving his case is thrown on the petitioner. At intervals, however, which vary according to his county and its climate, he is sure to find it worth while to appeal. He may be over-impatient, and might have done better for himself or for his successor had he waited; but he is shy of incurring useless expense, and seldom pleads except on the certainty of obtaining something. The weekly assembling of the Teind Court in the Parliament House is a solemn season indeed for the minister and for some laymen as well. The minister, after many searchings of heart, has made the grand *coup:* he is unlikely to have another opportunity in his lifetime, and the difference to him between pressure and comparative ease may depend on the fate of his application. Young débutants at the bar are largely employed—for the heritors, not for the clergy—in these parochial cases, as the pleading in defence is usually simple and straightforward. Yet nowhere, not even in the most momentous civil or criminal cases, is there so much of pomp and judicial paraphernalia. Ten or twelve judges, in their draperies of scarlet, are seated in terrible show, in a formidable semicircle. Their unsympathetic looks are unpleasantly suggestive of the banker you are persuading to permit you to overdraw, or of the usurer you are wrestling with for some temporary accommodation. Then the minister, whispering anxiously into the ear of his law-agent, sees his advocate get up. Generally the advocate is an old hand, well known among active lay members of the Assembly for the last twenty or thirty years. He pleads the rise in the cost of living, the increase in the outcome of social luxury, which the church has vainly been striving to stem; possibly the growth of population in an industrial parish. The counsel for the defence, on the other hand, does his best to rebut these statistics. He points out that the rise in mutton and beef since the last augmentation is materially exaggerated in the figures that otherwise do credit to the research of his learned friend, while broadcloths and woollen stuffs are infinitely more reasonable. He seldom concludes for an absolute rejection of the claim; he will be content to have it gravely modified. Then the judges lay their venerable heads together in knots of two or three; half-audible whispers circulate round the semicircle, and finally the president pronounces. Probably the minister is made reasonably happy: and at all events he is likely to get as much as his agent had led him to expect.

Let us hope that he does, for probably he needs it. He is pretty sure to have a houseful of bairns, and is driven to pinch here and there. But if the married minister can seldom be as hospitable as he would wish, the marriages he celebrates among his people give occasion for many merry-makings. The wedding takes place in the domicile of the bride, and the minister, coming there on duty, is bidden to bless the feast. Then the best parlour in the substantial farmhouse—the parlour so rarely used at other times—is swept and garnished and thrown open. There is not the same profuse and Camancho-like feasting that we hear of at Irish weddings. The invitations are not promiscuous; the guests

do not overflow into the yard and under the outbuildings, amid a pleasant fire of stories and jokes and the broaching of great kegs of potheen. But a wonderful amount of cooking is done at the wide fireplace in the kitchen, where usually a single mighty porridge-pot is swinging from its hook over the peat fire on the hearth. And while the families and their friends make merry in the parlour, the servants have their feast in the kitchen, where for once they exchange their oatmeal for "butcher-meat." Then the evening winds up with the dance in the barn, where country dances alternate with reels, where there is a vast deal of kissing and embracing, and the trays and the toddy-glasses are in constant circulation. *Honi soit qui mal y voit.* Probably the minister in any case has done little more than look in, and indeed the dancing and its snares are dispensed with altogether, if the heads of the houses be extra-serious. As for the christenings, they come off on the Sabbath, and are only celebrated with cake and dram-drinking. The father himself holds up his offspring in the middle of the service, in full face of the congregation, and vows and promises himself without the interposition of god-parents. The minister comes halfway down the pulpit stairs, gives the parent due exhortation as to the upbringing of the infant, dashes a handful of water into the baby's face, "calls it names," as Hood sang in "Miss Kilmansegge," and the ceremony is over. As the Presbyterians attach no saving importance to the rite, it is never hurried. Sometimes with a sickly child they tarry long for suitable weather, just as a funeral may be delayed for months in a Norwegian or Icelandic *sæter*, till the melting of the snows opens the paths to the *cortége*.

Talking of funerals, in the good old times, and in the mansions of the lairds, these used to be the most enjoyable of parochial festivities. The kith and kin came from great distances to be entertained in a style befitting the occasion. There were grave faces at the gathering when the guests assembled round the coffin to listen to a suitable prayer. Then glasses of wine were handed round once, twice, or oftener—the poorest people would procure wine for the occasion—and "the memory of the deceased" was toasted in silence. Then the long procession moved off to the kirkyard, and the body was laid silently in the grave. That duty being solemnly discharged, a load was visibly lifted from the assistants. Acquaintances came together in the carriages and mourning coaches, and there was plenty of animated conversation. When the guests took their seats at the tables in the dining-room, all were in excellent spirits and appetite. The near relations might be sad at heart, but they felt hospitably bound to stifle their sorrow, and there were ample appliances for drowning it. When the old fashion of drinking healths and "taking wine" prevailed, mourners were apt to get merry in spite of themselves; while, as may be supposed, the mere acquaintances of the deceased gave themselves over easily to boisterous joviality. It was a churlish thing to be the first to break up good company, and even the minister might well sit it out, till convivial example upset his decorum.

In the Scotch Church the probationers may dispense with high connections, inasmuch as they could never be greatly helped by them so far as snug preferment is concerned. There are few great prizes in anybody's gift. But then, on the other hand, though the Scotch livings are poor, a man need never be forgotten or neglected for want of opportunities of distinguishing himself. If he has good gifts and ambition, he may always come to the front in the free interchange of pulpits on the periodical sacramental occasions. *Toujours perdrix* is felt to be insipid in the remotest country parishes as elsewhere, and the people on whom the discourses of their own pastor have staled, are predisposed to admire the men who relieve him. The country parson who preaches in the town, and whose praises are bruited abroad in the surrounding churches, may count upon a "call" sooner or later. Then there are the church courts, where, by shrewd sense and a knowledge of business, he has a chance of making his mark among his brethren. He speaks well and to the point, he shows that he has a clear head, he is a close reasoner, and is ready in reply. He is regarded as a tower of strength by his friends, he is held in respect by the men he has got the better of, he is sent up to the General Assembly, and some interest of the Presbytery or Synod is specially confided to his care. There he makes his speeches before all the world, and sees them reported at length. The name of Mr. So-and-so of So-and-so becomes as familiar in Edinburgh or Glasgow as in his parish. In former days a divine seldom did more than print some stray volume of sermons, which probably fell stillborn. Now, as we have said, there are Presbyterian clergymen who are eminently distinguished in elegant literature, accomplished scholars as well as theologians; who fill professorial chairs with great distinction, and can hold their own besides with the most accomplished man of the world. Even without rising to such eminence, a man may easily do enough to make a certain name, when he is stamped with the degree of doctor of divinity. He has a reputation for earnestness, eloquence, or piety; he is respected as one of the leaders of his party, he grows insensibly in honour as in years, and in due time he receives the blue ribbon of the Kirk, and is dignified as Moderator of the General Assembly.

It is to be hoped that by that time he has laid his own teaching to heart, and learned to value mere earthly honours at their true price. But we can imagine how dizzy a pinnacle of earthly grandeur the Moderatorship must appear to the boy who is being brought up by his parents with a view to the work of the ministry. The Moderator is exalted among his peers and fellows to a seat only lower in degree than the throne of the Lord High Commissioner. He presides over a venerable assemblage of all that is most venerated in the land. He figures as the second King of Brentford in magnificent processions of horses and chariots, with military escorts and purse-bearers, and equerries and pages, passing through densely-crowded streets picqueted with horse and foot. He has the place of honour at the State dinner of Her Majesty's re-

presentative, and himself entertains all the world at a series of sumptuous breakfasts. It is not our purpose to dwell here on the good he does, or the good he may have done—works of which the Moderatorship is the recognition and recompense. But when he goes back to his rural parish, or to his charge in the country town, he may feel that it has been his privilege to have lived indeed, and to know that when he is gathered to his fathers, he will die in the fulness of fame. Nor have we any idea of dragging in that "disruption" movement, to which we have already repeatedly adverted, at the fag-end of an article. Those characteristics of clerical life which we have rapidly reviewed apply with trifling distinctions to the members of the rival churches. But it would be unjust to write of the Scotch ministers and their people without paying a passing tribute to the earnestness of those who originated the new communion which laymen have munificently endowed. All we have said of the natural ambition of young ministers to settle down into well-feathered nests, of the parsimony of heritors in augmenting their incomes or contributing to the rebuilding or repair of their manses, is, as we are assured, absolutely true. Yet here, at the close of "the ten years' conflict," we had some hundreds of gentlemen agreeing for conscience' sake to give up the worldly advantages they had struggled for; to go forth penniless from their comfortable homes, trusting their future and that of their families to Providence; consenting to resign the social position in the ancient establishment, which to many of them had been as the breath of their nostrils. Judging by the previous experiences of not a few, their faith in lay liberality must have been but slender. Yet they "went out" on sheer speculation, having deliberately counted the cost; for none of them could have foreseen, except some of the most popular preachers in the cities, how liberally what they had lost would be made up to them.

The Fear of Death.

We add a strange bitterness to the last parting, inasmuch as upon so many of the subjects relating to it we doom ourselves to a sort of anticipated loneliness. Few of us have the courage to speak quietly and freely of our own prospects of mortality with those nearest and dearest to us. Tenderness and custom combine to seal our lips; and there grows up a habit of reserve which we scarcely wish to break through. Yet the veil of habitual silence which we throw over death, as concerning ourselves, adds to that sense of mystery and chillness which it were surely wiser as far as may be to dispel than to increase. Each of us must die alone; but we need not encounter the fear of death alone.

How far is it true to say that the fear of death is a natural and universal instinct? or rather to what extent does the instinctive fear of it prevail among ourselves? The very reserve of which I have spoken makes it impossible to answer with any confidence. If such reserve may be taken as an indication of shrinking from a painful subject, this shrinking would appear to be much less strong among the poor than the rich. Their outspokenness with respect to their own approaching death, or that of parents or children whom they may be nursing with the utmost tenderness, is very startling to unaccustomed ears, and might almost suggest indifference, had we not ample reason to know that it is compatible not only with tender affection but with deep and lasting sorrow for the very loss of which by anticipation they spoke so unhesitatingly. No doubt all habits of reserve imply more or less of the power of self-control, which is so largely dependent upon education; but there would seem to be also a real difference of feeling between rich and poor about death. Perhaps their habitual plainness of speech about it may contribute towards lessening the fear of it among them. But there is an obvious and deeply pathetic explanation of their calmness in the prospect of it for themselves or for those dearest to them. The hardness and bareness of life lessens its hold upon them; sometimes even makes them feel it not an inheritance to be coveted for their children. The dull resignation with which they often say the little ones are "better off" when they die, tells a grievous story of the struggle for mere existence; while the simplicity of their faith in the unseen is equally striking in its cheerful beauty. Both habits of mind tend to diminish the fear of death itself, as well as the unwillingness to speak of it which belongs to more complicated states of feeling and more luxurious habits of life.

It is of course impossible fully to distinguish between the fear of death, and the fear of that which may come after death; and this is not

the place for fully considering the grounds of the latter fear. But our feeling about the great change is assuredly composed of many elements, and the nature of our expectation of another life is by no means the only thing which makes death more or less welcome. We do not probably at all fully realise how wide is the range of possible feeling about this life, making our anticipations of its ending as many-tinted almost as those with which we contemplate the hereafter. We tacitly agree in common conversation to avoid the subject as it concerns ourselves and our interlocutors, and in speaking of others we make it a point of good manners to refer to it as matter of regret; while religious books and sermons always assume that the King of Terrors can be encountered with calmness only by the aid of that faith which they preach. But is it really the case that apart from the terrors of religion and the courtesies of feeling, the end of life would always be unwelcome in its approach to ourselves and to others? Is there inherent in all of us a universal craving to prolong the term of this sublunary existence, and to prevent the loosening of any of its ties?

We may be pretty sure that there is some foundation in reason for any strongly prevalent manipulation of feeling. It is easy to see how this particular practice has grown up; but it does seem to have passed the limit of sincerity, and therefore of wholesomeness. Even if we may not speak freely, it must be well to think truly in a matter of such deep and frequent concern; and it can surely be no true part of religion to deepen the natural opposition of feeling to the lot which is appointed to all.

One of the great distinctions which the voluntary assumption of mourning tends to obliterate is that between timely and untimely deaths. There is no doubt a sense in which to the eye of faith no death can be untimely, but this is as distinctly a matter of faith as the blessedness of pain. Faith may discern a rightness in the cutting short of the young life, as in all forms of suffering and affliction; but though faith may be able to surmount all obstacles, neither faith nor reason can profit by our ignoring the natural inequalities of the ground. Some deaths are not in any true sense afflictions; and to say so need imply no disrespect, nay it may convey the very highest testimony, to the departed. We speak of survivors as mourners, till we forget that there are survivors who, in place of mourning, may for very love be filled with a solemn joy in the completed course to which added length of days could scarcely have added either beauty or dignity. When we allow ourselves to think of the reality rather than of the mere conventional description of the event, it seems wonderful that we should have only one word with which to speak of the completion and of the destruction of a human lifetime; only one word for the event which closes the long day's toil, and for that which crashes like a thunderbolt into the opening blossom of family life; for that which makes and that which ends widowhood; for the final fulfilment or reversal of all our temporal hopes; for bereave-

ment and for reunion. It is true that in one sense it is "one event" which befalls in all these cases, but the feelings belonging to it have as wide a range of colour as the sunset clouds. Need we wrap them all in the same thick veil of gloomy language and ceremonial?

At any rate, the feelings with which we contemplate the termination of our own earthly life must vary indefinitely in different individuals, and in the same individual at different times; and it would be a matter of deep interest to compare our respective experience if we could bring ourselves to do so.

It is sometimes said that no one can tell what his own feeling about death would be, until he has been brought face to face with it. This is no doubt true; but it is also true that the feelings with which we regard it from a distance vary as much as those with which we should meet its near approach, and that the former are more important to our welfare than the latter. To be "through fear of death all their lifetime subject to bondage," is a heavy burden, and I believe not an uncommon one. Generalising from the scanty materials gleaned by one ordinary observer, I believe that the purely instinctive fear is strongest in people of a very high degree of vitality; it is the shadow cast by intense love of life, and seems to depend in a great measure upon a certain kind of physical vigour. This may be one explanation of the strange and beautiful way in which the fear of death so often disappears as the event itself approaches; the weakened frame does not shrink from the final touch of that decay which has already insensibly loosened its hold upon life. Professional observers speak of cases in which the fear of dying is active to the last, as being extremely rare; it should probably be considered as a physical indication of vitality. For the same reason, perhaps, the fear of death is often comparatively slight in early youth, before the constitution has reached its full vigour, and before the habit of living has been very firmly established. At the same time, the very energy and buoyancy of a perfectly vigorous physical organisation help to dispel or to neutralise painful impressions; so that although the idea of death may be more naturally abhorrent to the strong than to the weak, they may be less habitually oppressed by the thoughts of it.

There also seems to be a deep, though obscure, connection between the wish and the power to live. Physicians and nurses have strange stories to tell of cases in which a strong motive for living has seemed sufficient to recall patients from the very grasp of death. Sometimes the mere assurance, given with a confident manner but a doubting heart, that recovery is possible, seems to give strength to rally and may turn the scale in favour of life. For this reason, amongst others, medical men are generally extremely unwilling to tell patients that there is no hope. There are cases on record in which such an announcement, though voluntarily elicited and met with perfect apparent calmness, has seemed to sap the strength in a moment and cause a sudden and rapid sinking. It is perhaps some physical instinct of self-preservation, rather than any

want of courage, which makes some sick people so carefully shun all opportunities for any such communication. The curious physical results of mental expectation make it often most inexpedient for the sick to know all that is known to others about their state; and perhaps only those who have lived long in sick rooms can fully appreciate the blessing to the watchers of having to do with a patient who neither anxiously questions nor fears to hear or to speak the plain truth, making it clear that to him the question of life or death is not one of overmastering importance. To be able, while the bodily life is trembling in the balance, to look beyond it in undisturbed serenity, is not only to be in the condition most favourable to health and happiness, it is to radiate strength and courage to all around. And some such influence, though in a more diffused and less perceptible form, is exercised during health by those who do not shrink from the prospect of death.

Perfect serenity in regard to death is not to be attained by any effort of the will, nor by any mere process of reasoning; it is rather the result of a happy combination of bodily and mental conditions. The chief of these conditions, the assured hope of a future beyond the grave in comparison of which the brightest earthly visions fade like a candle before the dawn, is not given to all; and in these days especially, it is for many overshadowed, if not altogether blotted out, by doubts and questionings which can no longer be hidden from the multitude. Even to those who most earnestly cling to the hope of immortality, it would seem that our troublous inheritance of sympathy must cast many a distressing side-light upon prospects in which of old the faithful were able to take undisturbed delight. However this may be, the mere prospect of prolonged existence beyond the grave, apart from other reasons for joyful confidence, must be taken rather as enlarging the scope of our hopes and of our fears than as necessarily altering the balance between them. Habitual hopefulness may colour the prospect beyond the grave with the same glowing tints which it throws over this world, so that in some cases the same cause which makes life delightful makes death not unwelcome. Such a state of mind, though rare, is not unknown. But perhaps a perfect balance of feeling is more readily to be found at a lower level of expectation.

It may be one of the natural compensations for a comparatively low degree of vitality that, in thinking of death, the idea of rest predominates over that of loss, so that there is no alloy of pain in the reflection that none of the troubles of this life can be more than passing clouds; that for each one of us "the Shadow sits and waits;" that the burden of life, however heavy, must drop off at last; and that none can say how near to anyone may be the final relief from all its evils. Weariness of mere existence is a heavy, and probably a very common, secret burden; one which makes the thought of annihilation more attractive to some of us than any celestial visions. Those who suffer from it would not welcome the brightest prospects of heaven, unless they could hope first for a "long and dreamless sleep" in which to wash off the travel-stains of the past.

This is a feeling which is probably most common in youth or old age, when the ties to life are fewer than they are in its prime, and when the past or the future may well look almost intolerably long to the wearied imagination. It may be that in the miserable experience of some sufferers this deep weariness of life may not exclude the fear of death; but so terrible a combination can scarcely be either common or lasting. Probably the normal state of things is that in which some degree of fear, or at least of reluctance, exists as a pure instinct; rising and falling with physical causes, ready to give force to the terrors of conscience and the cravings of affection, but held in check by various considerations and controlled by the will, if not utterly subdued by trustful hope. In people of active energetic temperament, with keen susceptibility to sensuous impressions, one may sometimes observe that no amount either of religious hope for another life, or of painful experience of this, will overcome the constitutional shrinking from the anticipated rending asunder of body and soul. They carry the same feeling through sympathy into their thoughts of the death of others, which appears to be almost physically shocking to them, however obviously acceptable to the person chiefly concerned. Such a state of feeling is to those who do not share it as unaccountable as it is evident. Looking at death calmly, as one of the very few circumstances of quite universal experience, any vehement disinclination to it would seem to be inappropriate as well as futile. But disinclination to some of its accidental circumstances is but too easily intelligible. This is probably another reason why the shrinking from it often seems to increase as youth is left behind. The very young cannot know how terrible a thing sickness is; those who have watched many deathbeds can scarcely forget the awful possibilities of physical suffering. And yet it seems probable that many of the worst appearances are more or less delusive. A very moderate experience of sick rooms suffices to show that actual suffering bears no exact proportion to its outward manifestations. Be this as it may, physical suffering is clearly no necessary accompaniment of death, and the dread of pain which makes us shrink from the prospect of mortal illness is quite a different thing from the real instinctive dread of death: it should indeed, and often does, act powerfully in reconciling us to the prospect of death.

In like manner the unwillingness to be taken away from life in its fulness, to be cut off from the enjoyment of bright prospects, and debarred from the satisfaction of that ever-deepening curiosity with which every active mind must behold the mysterious drama going on around us—this unwillingness is quite a distinct feeling from the shrinking of the flesh and spirit from dissolution. It is a feeling which should in reason belong in its full force only to those who look upon death as the end of all things, and for whom, therefore, it should at least have no terrors. Is it some mysteriously intense appetite, or an inveterate confusion of thought, which hinders most people from perceiving that *not to exist* can-

not possibly be in the slightest degree painful or even unpleasant? If, on the other hand, we regard death merely as a transition from one state of existence to another (and of an existence possibly of infinite duration), we open the door to all extremes of glorious or fearful expectation, and the event itself shrinks into insignificance. From this point of view, as well as from the last, though for such different reasons, the important question is not when we die, but how we live. Religion and philosophy on different grounds combine to impress upon us the continuity and mutual dependence of successive "dispensations" or "developments." We cannot conceive of, much less really believe in, any state of existence in which we can have any interest wholly disconnected from our interest in this life. The laws which regulate the world we know must be in some degree the laws of any world in which we can conceive of ourselves as existing and retaining our identity, and it is hard to understand how any rational being can find a fancied safety in the mere delay of an inevitable crisis. Of course the theological origin of such a fancy is familiar enough; but the result is, I think, as unworthy of its own religious basis as it is of our human dignity. To suppose that we can have any reasonable ground of confidence for this life either in or apart from an Almighty Being whom we cannot trust with our destiny in the next, is certainly not more foolish than it is faithless. Our hopes for this world and for the next must rest upon one foundation,—our faith must be equally prepared for trials in respect of both. Either death leads to nothing at all, and to fear it is unmeaning; or it is a mere parenthesis, and to fear it is unworthy of those who believe in a righteous order.

Still, while life is sweet, we must needs shrink more or less from what at least looks like its untimely termination. If it were not for the conventional association of sorrow with death already referred to, few, perhaps, would be selfish enough to wish to detain the aged from their rest, and to themselves the prospect is rarely unwelcome; but for the young in their springtime, or the middle-aged in their vigour, death necessarily involves a loss which is not the less real and need not be the less keenly felt because it may be regarded as overbalanced by the gain. Let our anticipations of life beyond the grave be as bright as they will, there can be no use in denying the preciousness of those which lie on this side of it; and the most ardently hopeful must still feel that, *if the choice lay with themselves*, it would be wisest not to hurry over the preliminary phase. But the truth is brought home to us again and again, that we have not light enough to choose by. In the dimness we can faintly discern that life has other kinds of completeness besides length of days:—

> It is not growing like a tree
> In bulk, doth make man better be;
> Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
> To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere.
> A lily of a day
> Is fairer far in May—

Although it fall and die that night,
It was the plant and flower of light.
In small proportions we just beauties see,
And in short measures life may perfect be.

As the years go on, there gathers a special radiance of eternal youth around some of the figures from whom all our hopes in this world have been most sharply severed. There are lives so rounded and crowned by their completed deeds of love, that Death seems to have appeared in the fulness of their prime only to consecrate them for ever; others stand apart from human ties in a solitude which makes time seem of little consequence, and the grave a not unfamiliar country. In all these cases we may even now see a fitness in what, according to mere reckoning of time, would be called unseasonable. And if we can catch glimpses of these things from without, there are no doubt many inward dramas which refuse to square themselves with the external framework of human life. We do not know to what unfathomable necessities the times and seasons of life and death may correspond, and as little do we know, in looking at each other's lives, what may be unfolding or what may be concluded, as seen from within. That which seems to others a cutting short of activity, may be to ourselves the laying down of arms no longer needed; our eyes may see the haven, where our friends can see only the storm; or if we cannot *see* a fitness in the time of our death, is that a strange thing in such a life as this?

C. E. S.

Regnard.

A WRITER of a monograph is always liable to err on the side of exaggeration. His interest in the subject of his studies naturally leads him to claim an undue importance for the men who from time to time engage his attention, and to bestow his praise with a too lavish hand. This defect, however, is not perhaps without its advantages, and after all there may be more readers ready to excuse than to accuse. At any rate the student who contents himself with modest excursions in unknown or insufficiently known paths in the field of literature or of history may flatter himself with the thought that he is tacitly protesting against the ticketing and labelling process to which all branches of knowledge are inevitably subjected in an age of specialism and examinations. Moreover, nowadays we are no longer satisfied with the dry facts contained in dusty folios and mouldering archives. The nineteenth century is athirst for humanity. So strong indeed is this tendency that of late years we have seen the rise of a school of art and literature which prefers life to art, and one of whose most powerful literary representatives, M. Emile Zola, does not hesitate to say that "a masterpiece frozen by the lapse of ages is, after all, nothing but a beautiful corpse." Such sentiments are of course only an extreme manifestation of the spirit which really actuates modern historical inquiry. We are no longer content with dates and battles; we want to witness rather the spectacle of the combats of intellect and of its conquests from age to age. We want to see the interior life of the men of times gone by, their sufferings, their thoughts, their struggles, and their triumphs. It has well been said that history must not merely reproduce, it must create. In its infancy history resuscitated legendary figures whose very names are unknown to us. What should it not do for the men whose ashes are hardly cold, and whom we find living at this hour in their works? It is in this spirit that Houssaye, the brothers De Goncourt, Desnoireterres, Fournier, D'Heylli, and a number of other writers, have laboured on that inexhaustible period which begins with Louis XIV. and ends with Bonaparte. And it is in this spirit, with all modesty, that the present article has been written.

Regnard falls between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and combines many qualities of the two periods. Although he is not perhaps much known in England, he is scarcely a writer whom one would look for in the bye-paths of literature. Both as a man and as an author he stands *à part*. He was a great traveller in days when travel

still made a man an object of public curiosity. He was an epicurean before epicureanism became the fashion. His earliest poetical essays were insipid imitations of Boileau, and the works of his ripe and enforced genius were the comedies of *Le Joueur*, *Le Légataire universel*, and *Les Folies amoureuses*.

Jean-François Regnard was born at Paris under the pillars of the Halles, only a few yards distant from the house in which Molière first saw the light thirty-three years earlier. He was baptized on the 8th of February, 1655. His parents were very well-to-do people, who held a leading position in the salt business. Regnard lost his father in early infancy, and was brought up by his mother and her two elder sisters. His education appears to have been very complete, and, as he himself tells us, the "demon of verse" possessed him very early in life; indeed, "before twelve winters had passed over his head he was already wandering on the slopes of Helicon." After the exercises of the Academy which completed the education of young men of family by teaching them not only mathematics and the classics, but also riding, dancing, and music, Regnard began to travel, starting apparently about the year 1671 or 1672; that is to say, in his seventeenth year. His first journey took him as far as Constantinople. He traversed Italy twice, on his way out and on his way home, and was absent in all about two years. During this time his passion for play declared itself, and, according to the traveller Misson, his winnings were so considerable, that after the expenses of his journey were paid, he still had a balance of some ten thousand crowns. The fortune left him by his father was anything but contemptible, and, to dismiss the question of money once for all, it may be said that Regnard always had a more than ample income. The curious difference between the destinies of the two men, who at a distance of only a few years were born in almost neighbouring houses, will not fail to strike the reader. Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, the son of a poor *tapissier*, was destined to stroll through the provinces, to write the *Misanthrope*, and to go down to posterity as the first comic poet of France; while Regnard enjoyed all the pleasures that wealth could buy in a dissolute and thoughtless age; he entertained kings and princes; and in his middle age, having exhausted the cup of enjoyment, and satisfied to the full his errant curiosity, he settled down *en cynique mitigé*, and wrote for his amusement those works which have won him a place in the temple of Comedy, second to Molière. Not much is known about his life. After remaining only a very short time at Paris on his return from Constantinople, Regnard again started in 1676, in company with a gentleman of Picardy, M. de Fercourt, for Italy, in which country he spent about two years at Bologna; and again, at Naples, he met a certain M. de Prade and his wife, an Arlesienne, who became the heroine of his only novel, *La Provinciale*. Regnard and Fercourt thought of passing on to the Levant, and while waiting for a favourable occasion they resolved to make an excursion to Marseilles, embarked on board

an English ship at Genoa, on board of which, by a curious chance, Regnard found M. de Prade and his wife. When in sight of the islands of Hyères the ship was attacked and taken by two Algerine corsairs, and all the passengers were sold into slavery at Algiers. After eight months' captivity, which was probably not so wretched as Regnard has described it in his novel, the families of Regnard and Fercourt sent the ransom of 12,000 francs, which was demanded for each of them by their masters. The consul, however, who was at the same time Vicar Apostolic and Lazarist, beat down the price to 10,000 francs, and with the balance he bought the liberty of the servant of Fercourt and of Madame de Prade for 2,000 francs apiece, which, by the way, is rather a low price for a heroine. In May, 1679, they embarked for France, and Regnard and his friends went to Arles to restore Madame de Prade to her family. What became of the husband we do not know. These are the simple facts on which Regnard embroidered his romantic story of *La Provinciale*. There is not much interest in the story, and there is the barest possible amount of description of things about which we would gladly know. Indeed, like most novels of the time, everything is subordinated to the passion of Zelmis for Elvire; that is to say, of Regnard for Madame de Prade. Perhaps the most amusing part of the whole book are the passages which Regnard devotes to his own personal charms. He was, he tells us, a cavalier who pleased at first sight; it was enough to see him once to remark him; the ladies had only to defend themselves against loving him too much; finally, in a letter which he represents Madame de Prade as writing to him from her prison, in reply to a proposition which he had made to aid her in escaping, the lady says, "Bring my husband with you, or, if that is not possible, leave some of your charms behind you." At this time we may easily figure Monsieur Regnard as a gay, amorous, but above all a self-satisfied Frenchman; brilliant, polished, and versed in the ways of courts and high society, for in his travels he had always made a considerable show, and later on we shall find him with kings for his guests. In 1681, again possessed by that demon which in one of his epistles he calls "l'ardeur de courir," Regnard set out for the north, apparently out of pure curiosity and restlessness of spirit. With two companions he passed through the Low Countries to Denmark, whence they crossed over to Sweden, and, at the invitation of the king, embarked for Lapland, where they remained two months and four days. Their northward progress was only arrested by the icy ocean, which fact they recorded in the following grandiloquent inscription, engraved on a rock at Pescomarca, which Regnard thought would never be read except by the bears:

> Gallia nos genuit; vidit nos Africa; Gangem
> Hausimus, Europamque oculis lustravimus omnem:
> Casibus et variis acti terraque marique,
> Hic tandem stetimus nobis ubi defuit orbis.

The verse about drinking the waters of the Ganges does not apply to Regnard, who never went so far eastward, but to one of his two companions. The account which Regnard wrote of this journey may still be read with interest, although one would have been glad to find more details. His next journey was to Poland, where he was presented to the king, John Sobieski. He returned by way of Hungary, Austria, and Germany, and arrived in Paris, and at the end of his wanderings, in the beginning of the year 1682. In most accounts of the life of Regnard it is said that he undertook these long and objectless travels in order to escape from the domination of a long and unsuccessful passion. But there is more than one reason for supposing that Regnard was hardly capable of a strong passion. Furthermore, the epilogue of all his wanderings seems to be summed up in the sufficiently selfish trio, "*Bon souper, bon gîte et le reste.*" Again, he mentions on more than one occasion the proud demon which drives him to brave all kinds of dangers in order to satisfy his "*ardeur de courir.*"

It must, too, be admitted that at the end of the seventeenth century it required no small amount of courage and endurance to enable a man to quit the peaceful and gay existence of a well-to-do Parisian, and to cross the seas, on which, as Regnard says, the sight of another ship was as much to be feared as striking a rock. At last, however, Regnard began to grow weary of his wandering life. When crossing the Baltic on his way to Sweden, and being frequently detained *en route* by storms, he tells us how he used to climb to the summit of some high cliff, there to meditate on his life and prospects. "It was in these interior conversations," he says, "that I opened my heart to myself without reserve, seeking in its innermost folds its most secret sentiments and disguises. First of all I turned my eyes upon the agitations of my past life,—its plans which were never executed, its resolutions never followed out, its unsuccessful enterprises. I considered the state of my present life, the vagabond journeys, the diversity of objects, and the continual movements by which I was agitated. I recognised myself in both of these states, in which inconstancy played a greater part than anything else. I took a healthy judgment. I perceived that all that was directly opposed to social life, which consists solely in repose, and that that happy tranquillity of soul is to be found in a pleasant profession which holds us like an anchor holds fast a vessel in the midst of the tempest." Here we find no signs of disappointed love. These are rather the words of philosophic indolence bracing itself up to take a decisive step in life, which after all will only prove to be another manifestation of that indolence. Nothing, he says elsewhere, is more difficult than the choice of a profession, "which is perhaps the reason why so many people do not embrace any calling, but remaining in a continual state of indolence, they live not as they would wish to live, but as they have commenced to live, either from fear of mistake, or from softness and dread of work, or from some other reason." Having at last decided to settle down,

Regnard bought the office of treasurer of France at the Bureau of Finance of Paris, a sort of magistracy, which allowed him plenty of leisure. With this semi-sinecure and his own private means, Regnard was sufficiently provided for as far as material wants were concerned. The reader will not fail to observe that the question of *bene vivere* came before that of *bene scribere*. However, now we have our future poet quietly settled down. Like most men, he hesitated and felt his way for a long time before he struck the true vein. He wrote a tragedy, *Sapor*, which was accepted at the Comédie Française, but never represented. He then amused himself by writing for the Italian troupe, which at that time used to play French pieces as well as the *lazzi* of the *Commedia del' Arte*. His first farce, called *Le Divorce*, was represented in 1688. Regnard, at first alone, and afterwards in collaboration with the gay and happy Dufresny, followed up this free and piquant vein, which corresponds more or less to the vaudevilles of the Variétés or of the Palais Royal, until 1696, the year before the Italian Theatre was closed. In 1694 he made his entry at the Comédie Française with a one-act piece entitled *Attendez-moi sous l'orme*. At this time, that is to say, when he was nearly forty, Regnard was still rhyming without success, "*Pour faire quatre vers il se mange trois doigts*," as he says of himself. His sketches for the Italian comedians were mostly perhaps done with the aid of Dufresny, and were probably mere after-dinner amusements. Nevertheless, like everything else in which Regnard had a hand, they are not wanting in gaiety at least. Regnard's ambition, however, was to shine as a satirist and writer of poetical epistles, and one day he must needs break a lance with the veteran Boileau by writing a reply to his satire against women. The result was a poetic warfare in which neither adversary spared the other. Later on they were reconciled, and Regnard dedicated his comedy of the *Ménechmes* to Boileau, who defended his presumptuous rival one day against a charge of mediocrity by saying "his gaiety at least is not mediocre." Suddenly, at the end of 1696, Regnard's comic genius burst out in all its glory in *Le Joueur*. The success of the piece was very great. Regnard had now found his true path, and the rest of his life was spent in following up his success, and in the enjoyment of his ease. Probably after the success of *Le Joueur* he resigned his office of treasurer, and lived the life of a rich epicurean. His house was situated just outside the *Porte de Richelieu*, where the Faubourg Montmartre now runs. In one of his Epistles (*Epître V.*) Regnard gives a description of his house, his larder, his guests, and his garden, for the Rue Richelieu was at that time almost in the country, and Regnard grew his own sorrel and lettuces.

The Epistle above mentioned is really quite an elegant Horatian production, in which, under the form of an invitation to dinner addressed to a friend, Regnard takes the opportunity of describing his house and his manner of life. His house, he says, was in a retired corner of Paris. In the background one could see the windmills of Montmartre. The garden was so small that the artichokes and mushrooms had only to take

one step into the kitchen; nevertheless it was well stocked and tastefully arranged. In this happy and tranquil retreat he did not care to know what was going on in the town; he did not allow his repose to be disturbed by the chattering of newsmongers or the pomp of parades and processions, but free from ambition, *love*, and jealousy, a *cynique mitigé*, he simply enjoyed life. Humble as his lodging was, and though the hangings had not been dipped in the dyes of the Gobelins, he still boasts to have numbered amongst his guests the Duc d'Enghien, the grandson of the great Condé, the Prince de Conti, and the two sons of John Sobieski, King of Poland, while amongst his regular friends were the Marquis d'Effiat and the poets Palaprat and Dufresny. At these simple feasts, he tells us, good wine and abundance of Attic salt made up for the absence of *entremets*. The dinner to which Regnard invites his friend, in this case, was to take place at one o'clock; if by chance he has forgotten where the house is, he must not ask for the "lodging of Monsieur Regnard," for heaven be praised, the poet continues, no one in the neighbourhood knows his face or name. He is to ask for the man who, pushed by a curious desire in his earliest years, wandered to where the first rays of the dawn light up the peoples of the Bosphorus, who was loaded with chains by the proud Ottoman, and who, as soon as his fetters were broken, opened a way to those distant shores which, for six months in the year, lack the warm light of the sun. The neighbours, it appears, had learnt the history of his life from the lips of his valet, who had a weakness for gossip. Amongst other particulars contained in this quaint Epistle, he tells us that his magisterial duties rarely called him to the courts; that the noise of his coach, as he returned home late at night, used to wake up his neighbours; and that he had no creditors. This description of his mode of life is just such as one might have expected. It is elegant, simple, tranquil, and selfish; it is a life, in short, of which many have dreamed, but which few have been able to attain. It can easily be imagined that in those days Regnard attracted a great deal of curiosity. His wit and his extensive travels must have made him a most amiable companion, while his reserve would only make his acquaintance all the more sought after. Indeed, it was the custom for illustrious strangers to pay a visit to the gay epicurean on their passage through Paris. Besides the Paris house, Regnard bought the Château of Grillon, some thirty miles out of town. Here he lived as the grand seigneur of the district; he was Lieutenant of the Waters, Forests, and Chase of Dourdan, Captain of the Castle of that town, and *Bailli d'épée du Hurepoix*. In his château, he tells us, were to be found good cheer, good wine, and choice society. The presidency of his two houses was given to two sisters, the Mlles. Loyson, two *célébrités galantes*, who, as contemporaries tell us, had long formed the ornament of the spectacles and promenades of Paris. Regnard died at the Château de Grillon at the end of 1709, at the age of fifty-four. His death was sudden, and there was some talk of suicide, but there is apparently no foundation for the report.

When we come to examine the works of Regnard, we find them entirely in harmony with his life. Both as a man and as a writer, he belongs to that generation of *libres esprits* which preceded the Regency, and whose philosophy was epicureanism, still elegant and stopping short on the brink of excess. His guiding maxim was indifference : hence he saw and described life without moralising upon it. He himself tells us of his determination to enjoy life *en cynique mitigé*, but even in confessing to a mitigated cynicism, he was perhaps libelling himself and wronging his amiable indifference. His chief quality, and the one to which he owes his immortality, is a brilliant natural and *naïf* gaiety pushed, as Sainte-Beuve says, even to genius. His gaiety is thoroughly French : his laugh is not the meditated laugh of Molière, it is not the simpering, mannered, and courtly laugh of Marivaux, nor the biting laugh of Voltaire. It is the frank and spontaneous laugh of the man who laughs at his own jokes. There is no hesitation about it, the gaiety is in the man, and it must burst out. Sometimes it touches the gaiety of Rabelais and Brantome, sometimes it is slightly *grivois*, but it is ever young and ever irresistible. The gaiety of Regnard added to his wonderful skill in planning the intrigues of his comedies enabled him to write works which are as fresh now as they were on the day they were first represented. I remember not long ago seeing a *reprise* of that exquisite play, the *Folies amoureuses*, which is a very characteristic example of Regnard's work. The plot is the well-worn one of an old, grumbling, and jealous guardian who falls in love with his ward, a sprightly little maid of sweet seventeen. Albert, the guardian, imprisons his ward in his château, makes her life miserable by his jealous supervision, and prevents her from sleeping at night by wandering about the house like a ghost on the look-out for thieves or lovers. All the three acts of the comedy take place in an avenue in front of the château. The lover appears, accompanied by the traditional valet such as we find him described by Lesage ; Agathe, the ward, falls in love with him ; and the whole action of the play then lies in a series of mad frolics and disguises, to which of course the guardian falls a victim, and all ends happily in the defeat of the ridiculous plans of Albert, as we foresaw from the beginning. There is here very little intrigue, yet so continuous and sparkling is the contagious gaiety which crops up in almost every verse that the more than an averagely intelligent Parisian audience which assembled to see the play laughed until the tears rolled down their cheeks. It was almost, to use a New-England expression, too funny for comfort. In the third scene, where Agathe feigns madness, and enters successively in the costume of Scaramouche, of an old woman, and of a soldier, the gaiety and humour reach their acme, and they alone would suffice to place Regnard amongst the first comic writers not only of France but of the world. He might apply to us at this day the words which he puts into the mouth of Agathe, in her disguise of an old woman—

Vous êtes ébaubis
De me trouver si fraîche avec des cheveux gris.

Well might Sainte-Beuve lament in 1852 that French gaiety was a thing of the past. He might even then have foreseen the era of moral and psychological comedy, the era of Sardou, Augier, and Dumas fils, under which our neighbours now live. Nevertheless, if modern writers cannot equal the laughing genius of Regnard, a modern audience can appreciate it, as is amply proved by the success with which revivals of his works are invariably attended. To Regnard everything furnished matter for comedy, the most melancholy spectacle as well as the most sacred sentiment. His unscrupulous and unmoralising gaiety aroused the indignation of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who wrote *à propos* of *Le Légataire universel:* "It is incredible that a comedy should be played publicly in the middle of Paris, and with the approbation of the police, in which, in the room in which we have just seen the uncle expire, his nephew—the honest man of the piece—busies himself, together with his worthy following, in matters which the law rewards with a hempen cord; forgery, falsification, theft, roguery, lying, inhumanity—everything is there, and everything is applauded. Surely this is a fine education for young folks, *nescii auræ fallacis,* who are sent to that school where grown men have no small difficulty in defending themselves against the seduction of vice." Jean-Jacques' *réquisitoire* had its effect, and the piece was discontinued. Yet, as has been well remarked by M. Arsène Houssaye, what does this piece of declamation prove except the extra-comic genius of Regnard? Like Lesage's immortal *Gil Blas,* Regnard's *Légataire* will not bear examination from the point of view of high morality. For what is Gil Blas when reduced to his simplest expression and extricated from the maze of adventures in which he is lost? He is a very mediocre intriguer, malleable to vice, invulnerable to passions, having no other ambition than that of well-being, and incapable—even when a favourable wind fills his sails—of soaring above the plains of daily interest. The only trait which remains unchanged in him is his good humour, which, too, constitutes the charm of the prose epopee of which he has happily been described as less the hero than the factotum. It is true that the Confession of Gil Blas, deprived of all the charm of the narrative, would terrify the most hardened ears; but the imperturbable smile with which the penitent tells his tale would always win him absolution. So it is with Regnard, not only in the *Légataire* but in a number of his other pieces, where the unscrupulous valet and the scheming *soubrette* transgress the laws of the land and the laws of morality so gaily and carelessly that the most severe stoic would give them his sympathy while refusing his esteem. Regnard's horizon may be low, and, as far as we know, he never formed any ideals. He is as a rule, and one might almost say systematically, wanting in that profound observation which pierces to the utmost depths of men and things. Like Lesage he is attracted rather by details and minutiæ, and great vices or great virtues are equally beyond the reach of both the one and the other. Gaiety has the upper hand, and veils, as it were, the monotony of the

embroidery by the sprightly brilliancy of its colours. It is very earthly, it is true, and the soul cannot thrive solely on such food. Reverie, idealism, melancholy, and similar modern maladies which now complicate the real evils of life, are unknown in that world. Regnard's men and women take things for what they are; they analyse nothing, not even their unhappiness; there is a kind of joy in the air which dissipates sadness, and renders existence light. An interesting comparison might be drawn between the atmosphere of Regnard and Lesage and that of Cervantes; between the period when the orgies and frivolities of the Regency had already commenced with closed doors, and the previous century in which the noble and pure-souled Chevalier de la Manche scaled the stony paths of the jagged Sierra in search of the dragon's cave, the giant's tower, and the enchanted springs. What a contrast between his greatness of soul and the *rouerie* and roguery of Gil Blas and Crispin! Such reflections, however, need not lead us to disparage the purely earthly geniuses. They have left us much for which we shall be eternally grateful. But still it is well to bear in mind the character of Regnard's whole being. As we shall see further on, some modern introspective critics have been tempted to put a wrong interpretation on some of his creations, and to attribute to them ideas and sentiments which are chronologically incorrect. If we remember the close affinity, though in different spheres, which exists between Regnard and Lesage, we shall arrive at a more accurate appreciation of his work. Let us take, for instance, another of Regnard's plays, *Le Joueur*, which, in the opinion of many judges, is his masterpiece. A gambler, one would think, is rather a sad than a comic character, yet *Le Joueur* is anything but a sad play. It is a mistake to imagine Valère as a regular gambler, gloomy, morose, and cold-hearted. He has none of the *sang-froid* which marks the elegant baccarat-player for whose benefit or ruin the clubs of modern Paris exist; Regnard never aimed at such realistic studies. No doubt he described what he saw; that is to say, his characters live in an atmosphere and *milieu* with which he was familiar, but they have been sublimated and generalised in passing through the crucible of his fancy. Valère is a *débraillé* of good company; there is an air of careless lightness even in his expressions of love and in his transports of fury. The more wit, grace, and brilliancy the actor gives to this charming *rôle*, the more nearly will he approach the ideal of Regnard. Those who endeavour to interpret Valère as a careful and realistic study of character are led astray by their familiarity with the spirit of modern comedy, and attribute to Regnard an intention which is at variance with his whole genius and disposition. Valère has all the happy and careless *désinvolture* of the seigneurs of old times, such as Lesage has painted for us in *Gil Blas*. They bluster and swear because it relieves them, but at heart they laugh at themselves and at their foibles. Nevertheless *Le Joueur* is one continuous series of grave situations, and yet we cannot help remarking the domination of laughter. Even the *motif* of the play, namely the struggle between love

and the passion for play, is not essentially comic, and from a moral point of view it excites even disgust. The way in which Regnard has vanquished these difficulties is only another proof of his purely comic genius.

While we are still talking of *Le Joueur*, it may be stated that the play was the cause of a scandal and quarrel between Regnard and Dufresny, who claimed the play for his own. It seems that Dufresny, who was as much a gambler as Regnard, wrote a piece called *Le Chevalier Joueur* in prose; Regnard undertook to point out the defects, and, after keeping the manuscript in his possession some six months, he at last returned it ornamented with a number of scores and crosses. "What!" said Dufresny, "do you take my comedy for a cemetery?" However, he set to work again at the piece, but his star was beginning to pale. Meanwhile Regnard had his *Joueur* produced at the Comédie Française. Dufresny accused him of plagiarism, and Regnard retorted the charge. Dufresny's piece was played two months afterwards, and failed. The public took part in the controversy, and amongst the thousand epigrams to which the affair gave occasion, we find one which probably contains a good deal of truth:

> Chacun vola son compagnon,
> Mais Mons. Regnard eut l'avantage
> D'avoir été le bon larron.

As a matter of fact Dufresny's play was a failure, whereas Regnard's was a success. Again, it has often enough been remarked that in the free field of thought the master thief has a right to his booty. When a man like Molière or Regnard puts his mark, he has a right to take his ideas where he finds them.

A propos of the *Légataire universel*, M. Louis Moland has pointed out that the plot which excited so strongly the virtuous indignation of Jean-Jacques is taken from a stock Italian story, which is to be found in one of the innumerable *novellieri* of the sixteenth century. Marco Cadamosto de Lodi, an ecclesiastic who lived at Rome under the pontificates of Leo X. and Clement VII., left *Sonnetti ed altre Rime con alcune Novelle* (in Roma, per Antonio Blado, 1544, in 8vo). The novels are six in number. In one of them an old man bequeaths all his fortune to the hospitals. An old and faithful servant of the family, having learned this unjust disposition, informs the children of the contents of their father's will. During the night following the decease of the testator, the body is conveyed to another room; the servant, in concert with the children, plays the part of Crispin, and gets into his master's bed; a notary is sent for, and the false invalid dictates a will in favour of his master's children, at the same time taking care to bequeath an enormous legacy to himself. Many of these Italian tales have been traced back to the old French *fabliaux*, and this one may well have the same source; it is, indeed, satirical and ironical after the old *veine gauloise*, and bears a close relationship to *Pathelin*. If this conjecture be correct, *Le Légataire universel* may be compared with the *Médecin malgré lui* and

Georges Dandin, in both of which cases one of the earliest essays of the infancy of French literature has been taken up by a master hand and developed to the highest perfection in the maturity of that literature.

In order to justify what will perhaps be considered a somewhat high estimate of Regnard, let us consider, from a general point of view, his genius and method. First of all, let us ask, What are the qualities of a comic poet? Knowledge of men and manners is obviously of the first necessity. Secondly, the comic poet must have the talent of creating characters. Thirdly, he must have the art of imagining an intrigue. Finally, unless he possesses the gift of style, all the previously mentioned qualities will fail to exercise their full effect, and his work will be like a picture without a frame. The comic poet must then be at the same time a moralist, a painter of character, a dramatist, and an artist in words. As regards knowledge of men and manners, Regnard was not wanting in experience at least. He had mixed with all kinds of society. He had lived in all the great capitals of Europe, and was as familiar with the *salons* and *tripots* of Rome, Algiers, Madrid, London, and Stockholm, as he was with those of Paris. The kind of comedy, however, towards which he was most inclined was unfavourable to a display of this experience in detail. Yet Sainte-Beuve remarks the exact coincidence of Regnard's observations on the young men of his time with those made by Mme. de Maintenon in her letters to Mme. des Ursins. Mme. Grognac and Lisette, in *Le Distrait*, when they talk of the habits and bearing of the young men *à la mode*, describe a state of society which forms the exact pendant to what the rigid Mme. de Maintenon says of the fashionable young ladies of the time of the Duchess of Bourgogne.

Without entering upon the question whether a play ought to inculcate a moral or not, and whether the theatre is a means of education or merely of amusement, it may be admitted as an actual fact that if comedy does not correct, it at least does justice. There are two ways in which this result may be obtained. Some personage whose business it is less to act than to judge, fulfils the *rôle* of the ancient chorus, and pronounces the decisions of the poet; such characters are Molière's Ariste and Philinte. Or, on the other hand, the poet simply draws out his scenes and situations, and allows the moral to disengage itself from the painting of the characters and from the shock of passions, which on the stage as in real life always punish one another. This is Regnard's favourite method, so far as he concerns himself with morality; and as the theatre is after all a place of amusement, and not a pulpit, it is perhaps the best. But Regnard is everything rather than a moraliser. He was indifferent as to good and evil, being entirely a *bon vivant* and a man of pleasure to whom life was a pure carnival. Molière, on the contrary, at heart not indifferent to vice and virtue, was even, especially in later life, a bit of a misanthrope. Regnard, possessing as he did in the highest degree the great privilege of bringing a frank and hearty laugh to our lips, subordinated the moral of his plays to the

amusement of the spectators, and on this account, with the exception, perhaps, of *Le Joueur*, he has risen but little above the ordinary characters of the comedy of intrigue. Valère, in *Le Joueur*, is a character with a great deal of truth in it, though, as I have remarked above, it is not to be taken for a sketch *sur le vif*. He is a gambler, and will always be a gambler. He is full of little superstitions. When he has his pockets full of money he refuses to pay his debts, for he says—

Rien porte malheur comme payer ses dettes.

When he pawns the portrait of his mistress, he gilds his perfidy with the flattering hope that the money offered by the hands of love is an augury of good fortune. There is, however, one exquisite touch in the conclusion of the play which might be taken as an almost isolated instance of Regnard's penetration of womanly character. One would think at first sight that, as Angélique really loves Valère, she ought to marry him in spite of his incurable gambling propensities. In this case he would continue to play at the expense of the happiness of Angélique, and thus both passions would be satisfied and attain their ends. But it has been excellently remarked that when Angélique finds her portrait in the hands of the *fripière*, Mme. la Ressource, *amour propre* dominates over love, and though she loves Valère she will rather suffer than marry him.

Owing to the fact that Regnard devoted himself to the comedy of intrigue, there is a certain monotony in his *répertoire*, on account of the same personages constantly bringing about the same situations. Still, Regnard excels in reproducing the physiognomy and almost the gestures and bearing of his characters, and though there is a sameness in the general types, his inexhaustible gaiety prevents us from noticing any monotony. As regards the world which Regnard has put upon the stage, it is that of which Lesage has given us the epopee. It is that of the period which was not yet the Regency, but which prepared and announced it.

Though Regnard was perhaps not wanting in observation, there is nevertheless a great blank in his works which cannot be passed by without remark, namely, the absence of female characters. Agathe in the *Folies amoureuses* is a charming *travestie*, but that is all; Angélique, in *Le Joueur*, is not sufficiently developed to enlist our sympathy; Isabelle and Clarice, in *Le Distrait*, have no qualities which charm us, or fix themselves in our memory; they are rather merely personages which assist in carrying out the intrigue; while such types as Mme. Grognac, Mme. Argante, and Mme. la Ressource are both sketchy and uninteresting, while at the same time they are not ornaments to their sex. We find no use made of the material which Regnard had under his hand in the *grandes dames* or the *bourgeoises* of his time, and the meagre and colourless representatives of womanhood which are to be found in his comedies serve only to make us regret the matchless

and exquisite gallery of Molière. This being the case, it is not surprising that love does play a more conspicuous part in his writings than it did in his life.

The reader will be able to judge for himself whether Regnard possessed the art of imagining an intrigue. Sainte-Beuve, whose name in England carries sometimes even an undue authority, has declared his opinion that in the four best plays of Regnard, *Le Joueur*, *Les Folies amoureuses*, *Le Légataire universel*, and *Le Distrait*, the intrigue is better planned and the *dénoûment* better developed than in any of Molière's pieces.

The fourth quality of style is one on which it is exceedingly difficult for a foreigner to express an opinion, although foreign critics, as a rule, do not flinch from the task. It would be, perhaps, wiser to bear in mind that a man who knows his own language knows more than most of his fellows. Let us then be content to register the opinion of competent French critics. The critic above quoted finds that there is a body and bouquet in Regnard's verses, as there was in the generous wines which he had in his cellars.

In short, in passing from the great masters of the seventeenth century to Regnard, we find that he possesses all their exactness and copiousness, together with the vivacity of the stylists of the eighteenth century. He has already the suppleness and spirit of Voltaire, with even more dash and colour. Indeed the amount of sustained movement in his versification has rarely been equalled and hardly surpassed.

Regnard, both in his life and in his works, was a thorough and characteristic Frenchman. As a comic author, he comes of the true French stock. He is less profound, less powerful, and less of a philosopher than Molière, but he is lively and gay, and that predominating quality which all agree in attributing to him, namely gaiety, was one of the most precious gifts of old France, a gift too which, whatever may be said, modern France has not entirely lost. A frank and hearty laugh may be a marvel in the salons of the Jockey Club, and in the stately boudoirs of the Faubourg Saint Germain, but the mass of the French nation is still at heart happy and *insouciant* in spite of the unparalleled political troubles by which it has been oppressed. Owing to this quality Regnard is and will be ever young. Moreover, he is more of an artist than one would at first think. His pieces proceed with an ease and rapidity which mark a man who was, one may say, born for the theatre. His art is all the more consummate because we do not notice it. His exposition is clear, his incidents almost bewildering in their multiplicity, and his *dénoûments* always satisfactory. Even in his slightest sketches, in the *vaudevilles*, for instance, which he wrote for the Italian troupe, and which formed for him such an excellent apprenticeship to the more elaborate comedy, we find the same agility and audacious movement that distinguished his most finished productions. His style, combining the

copiousness of Rabelais with the harmonious elegance of Racine, is acknowledged to be a model of the language of comedy.

Regnard as a man will, perhaps, be to some as interesting as he is as a poet. An elegant French *littérateur* has given Regnard the credit of commencing in France the series of Don Juans after the Byronian model. There may, perhaps, be more truth in the comparison than one would suppose at first sight. In Algeria he found the episode of Haidee, and if we take off his towering periwig we have almost the bust of Byron—the voluptuous mouth, the open and impatient nostril, and the bold and piercing eye. His comedies pale before the romance of his youth, and he, perhaps, cared more for his adventures than he did for his rhymes.

T. E. C.

Aberglaube.

I know of a noble Lady
  Who has never lifted her veil,
Her hand, on the aching temples,
  Is tender, and cool, and pale:

Her raiment is black and crimson,
  Her voice, which is seldom loud,
Is drowned by a lover's whisper,
  But not by a surging crowd;

And her speech, which is heard within us,
  Soundeth as if from far,
And she calleth the things that are not
  To rebuke the things that are.

Therefore her word is the pillar
  Of whatever standeth on earth,
And if aught on earth be precious,
  Her sentence gives it worth.

She is very staid in her going,
  As if she knew that haste
Would scatter the manna, hidden
  For wayfarers to taste.

Yet, whithersoever we hasten,
  We find her waiting there;
And she walks where the ways are foulest,
  As if she trod upon air.

I have told of her speech and her going;
Of her deeds there is this to tell,
She lifteth up to heaven,
She casteth down to hell.

On earth she layeth foundations,
And others build thereupon;
When they set the headstone with shoutings
She is far away and gone.

For her road is with them that labour,
Her rest is with them that grieve;
Her name is Faith, while you serve her;
When you lose her, Make Believe.

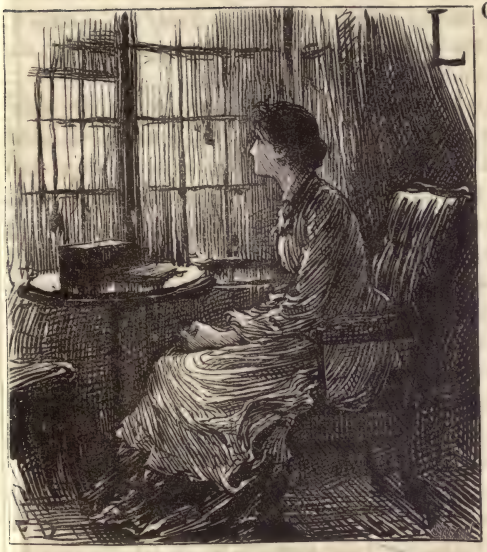
G. A. SIMCOX.

ARM IN ARM THEY CAME OUT FROM AMONG THE TREES.

Within the Precincts.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Captain's Wife.



LOTTIE could do nothing but stand bewildered and gaze at this new claimant of her regard. Surprise took all the meaning, all the intelligence out of her face. She stood with her eyes wide open, her lips dropping apart. Her new mamma! She had the indescribable misfortune of not being able to think upon her own mother with any reverence or profound affection. Mrs. Despard was but "poor mamma" to her, no more. Lottie could not shut her eyes to the deficiencies of that poor woman, of whom the best that could be said was that she was dead, and beyond the reach of blame. There was no cherished and vaunted idea, therefore, to be outraged; but perhaps all the more Lottie's soul rose up in rebellion against the title as applied to anyone else. She had known what was coming, and yet she was as entirely taken by surprise as if this idea had never been suggested to her. With eyes suddenly cleared out of all the dazzling that had clouded them, she looked at the woman thus brought in upon her—this intruder, who however had more right to be there than even Lottie had—the Captain's wife. If this event had happened a month or two ago, while she retained all her natural vigour, no doubt, foolish as it was, Lottie would have made some show of resistance. She would have protested against the sudden arrival. She would have withdrawn from company so undesirable. She would have tried, however absurd it might have been, to vindicate herself, to hold the new-comer at arm's length. But this had all become impossible now. At no other moment could she have been so entirely taken by surprise. All the apprehensions about

her father which had been communicated to her on former occasions had died out of her mind. She had never said very much about this danger, or been alarmed by it as Law was. It had not occurred to her to inquire how it would affect herself. And now she was taken altogether by surprise. She stood struck dumb with amazement, and gazed at the woman, instinctively taking in every particular of her appearance, as only a woman could do. Unconsciously to herself, Lottie appraised the other, saw through her, calculating the meaning of her and all her finery. No man could have done it, and she was not herself aware of having done it; but Polly knew very well what that look meant. Notwithstanding her own confidence in her bridal array, even Polly felt it coming to pieces, felt it being set down for what it was worth; and naturally, the feeling that this was so, made her angry and defiant.

"How do you do, Miss?" she said, feeling that even her voice sounded more vulgar than it need have done. "I hope as we shall be good friends. Your pa has played you a nice trick, hasn't he? but men is men, and when they're like he is, there's allowances to be made for them." Polly was aware that this speech was in her very worst style. She had not intended to call Lottie Miss; but with that girl standing staring, in a plain cotton frock, looking a lady every inch of her, from the crown of her head to the sole of her foot—a bride, in a fine bonnet covered with orange-blossoms and a bright silk dress that matched, was not in possession of her faculties. Bold as she was, she could not but be conscious of a tremor which mingled with her very defiance. "Well, I'm sure, what a pretty table!" she resumed, "They might have known we were coming home, Captain. There ain't much on it, perhaps—not like the nice chicken and sausages you'd have got at mother's. But mother would never have set it out so pretty, that I'll allow." Then Polly looked round upon the dim old walls, faintly lighted by the lamp. "So this is the dining-room," she said; "this is my new 'ome. To think I never should have been inside the door till now. Let me alone, Harry. I don't want none of your huggings. I want to make acquaintance with my new 'ome. You know well enough I married just as much for the sake of living in the Lodges as for you—don't you now?" she said, with a laugh. Perhaps only fathers and mothers, and not even these long-suffering persons always, can look on at the endearments of newly-married couples with tolerance. Lottie was offended, as if their endearments had been insulting to herself. She looked at them with an annoyed contempt. No sympathetic touch of fellow-feeling moved her. To compare this, as she thought, hideous travesty of love, with her own, would have but hardened her the more against them. She turned away, and shut the window, and drew down the blind, with an energy uncalled for by such simple duties. When the Captain led his wife upstairs, that she might take off her bonnet, Lottie sat down and tried to think. But she could not think. It had all happened in a moment, and her mind was in an angry confusion, not

capable of reason. She could not realise what had happened, or what was going to happen—an indignant sense of being intruded upon, of having to receive and be civil to an unwelcome visitor, and an impatience almost beyond bearing of this strait into which her father had plunged her, filled her mind. Something more, she dimly felt, lay behind—something more important, more serious; but in the meantime she did not feel that her occupation was gone, or her kingdom taken from her. A disagreeable person to entertain—a most unwelcome, uncongenial guest. For the moment she could not realise anything more. But her mind was in the most painful ferment, her heart beating. How was she to behave to this new, strange visitor? What was she to say to her? She must sit down at table with her, she supposed. She was Captain Despard's—guest. What more? But Lottie knew very well she was something more.

Mary came in, bringing tea, which she placed at the head of the table, where Lottie usually sat. Mary's eyes were dancing in her head with curiosity and excitement. "What is it, Miss? oh, what is it, Miss? What's happened?" said Mary. But Lottie made her no reply. She did not herself know what had happened. She waited for the return of "the woman" with a troubled mind. Everything was ready, and Lottie stood by ready to take her seat the moment they should come back. She heard them come downstairs, laughing and talking. The woman's voice filled all the house. It flowed on in a constant stream, loud enough to be heard in the kitchen, where Mary was listening with all her ears. "Very nice on the whole," the new-comer was saying; "but of course I shall make a few changes. I've always heard that a room should be like its mistress. There's not half enough pretty things to please me. I do love a pretty room, and plenty of anti-macassars and pink ribbons. Oh, I shan't tell *you* what I am going to do to it!—not a word. Gentlemen must be taught their place. I am going to make it look very nice, and that should be enough for you. Oh yes, I am quite ready for supper. I haven't touched a bit of anything since five o'clock, when we had tea. Poor Harry, I can see how you have been put upon." This was said at the foot of the stairs, where not only Lottie but Mary could hear every word. Mary understood it all, but Lottie did not understand it. She could not receive Polly's programme into her mind, nor think what was meant by it. While she still stood waiting, the two came in—the bride, with her tower of hair upon her head, and all her cheap ribbons and bangles. She came in, drawing herself away from the Captain's encircling arm. "Behave!" said Polly, shaking a finger at him; and she swept in and round the table, almost pushing against the surprised spectator who stood looking on, and deposited herself in Lottie's chair. "It's best to begin as you mean to end," said Polly; "I'm not tired to speak of, and I'll take my own place at once. You can sit here, Miss Lottie, between him and me."

Still, Lottie did not know what to think or to say. She stood still,

bewildered, and then took the place pointed out to her. What did it mean? It was easy enough to see what it meant, if her head had not been so confused. "Yes, dear," said Polly, "a little bit of cold beef—just a very little bit. I am not fond of cold victuals. That's not how we've been living, is it? and that's not how I mean you to live. Oh no, I don't blame Lottie. Unmarried girls don't know any better. They don't study a man like his wife knows how to do. I can see how it's been; oh, I can see! Too many mouths to feed, and the meat has to be bought according. Who is your butcher, Miss? Oh, *him!* I don't hold with him. I shall send for Jones to-morrow; he's the man for my money. Wasn't that a lovely sweetbread that we had at our wedding breakfast? You didn't remark? Oh, nonsense, I'm sure you remarked! It *was* a beauty! Well, that was from Jones's. I'll send for him to-morrow. Do you take sugar in your tea, Miss Lottie? Dear! I shouldn't have thought it; so careful a young lady. 'Enery, darling, what are you drinking? Do you take tea?"

"I don't mind what I take, my love, so long as you give it me," said the gallant Captain; "tea or poison, I'd take it from that hand; and I don't want anything but to look at you, at the head of my table. This is how it should be. To think how long I have been denying myself, forgetting what happiness was!"

"You poor dear Harry! all for the sake of your children! Well, I hope you'll find it repaid. They ought to be grateful. The times and times that you and me has talked it over, and given it up for their sakes! You're very quiet, Miss; you don't say much," added Polly; "but I dare say it was a surprise to you, seeing me come home?"

"Why don't you speak up and make yourself pleasant?" said the Captain, with a kind of growl under his breath.

Lottie came to herself a little by dint of this pressure. She did not seem to know how it had come about, or what the emergency meant. "I beg your pardon," she said, her head swimming and everything going round with her, "I am—taken very much by surprise. If I had known what was going to happen, I—might have been more prepared."

"I can understand that," said Polly. "Hold your tongue, Captain. She is quite right. You ought to have written and told her, as I asked you. But now that you do know, I hope you mean to be friendly, Miss. Them that treats me well, I treats them well. I don't wonder that you don't like it at first," she added graciously; "a girl no older than yourself! But he would have it, you know, and what could I do? When a man's in that way, it's no use talking to him. I resisted as long as I could, but I had to give in at the last."

"By George!" said the Captain, helping the beef. He had some one to stand by him now, who he felt might be a match for Lottie; but he was still a little afraid of Lottie, and consequently eager to crow over her in the strength of his backer. "The trouble I've had to bring matters to this point," he said; "but never mind, my love, it is all right

now you are here. At one time I thought it never was going to be accomplished. But perseverance——"

"Perseverance does a deal; but, bless you, I never had no doubt on the subject," said the new Mrs. Despard, taking up her teacup in a way that was very offensive to Lottie. The Captain looked at her from the other end of the table, with a kind of adoration; but nevertheless the Captain himself, with all his faults, was painfully aware of her double negatives, and thought to himself, even when he looked at her so admiringly, that he must give her a few lessons. He had never paid much attention to Lottie, and yet he could not help getting a glimpse of his new wife through Lottie's eyes.

"Where is my son?" said Polly. "Harry, darling, where is that dear Law? He won't be so much surprised, will he? He had a notion how things were going. But I've got a great deal to say to him, I can tell you. I don't approve of his goings on. There's a many things as I mean to put a stop to. Nobody shall say as I don't do my duty by your children. I shall tell him——"

"Do you know Law?" said Lottie. This gave her a little chill of horror; though indeed she remembered that Law had spoken of some one —some one about whom Lottie had not cared to inquire.

"Oh yes, Miss, I know Law." (Polly did not know how it was that she said Miss to Lottie. She did not mean to do it. She did it, not in respect, but in derision; but the word came to her lips, whether she would or not.) "Law and I are old friends. Time was when I didn't feel sure—not quite sure, you know," she said, with a laugh of mingled vanity and malice, "if it was to be the father or the son; but, Lord, there's no comparison," she added hastily, seeing that even on the Captain's fine countenance this boast produced a momentary cloud. "Law will never be as fine a man as his father. He hasn't got the Captain's carriage, nor he ain't so handsome. Bless us, are you listening, Harry? I didn't mean you to hear. I don't think you handsome a bit, now, do I? I'm sure I've told you times and times——"

The two thus exchanging glances and pretty speeches across the table were too much occupied with themselves to think of anything else. And no one heard Law's approach till he pushed open the door, and with a "Hillo!" of absolute amazement, stood thunderstruck, gazing upon this astonishing spectacle. The sight that Law beheld was not a disagreeable sight in itself: the table, all bright with its bouquet of crimson leaves, which the Captain had pushed to one side in order that he might see his wife—and the three faces round it, two of them beaming with triumph and satisfaction. The young man stood at the door and took it all in, with a stare, at first, of dismay. Opposite to him sat Lottie, put out of her place, looking stunned, as if she had fallen from a height and did not know where she was. As he stood there she lifted her eyes to him with a look of wondering and bewildered misery which went to Law's heart; but the next moment he burst into a loud laugh, in spite of himself. To see

the governor casting languishing looks at Polly was more than his gravity could bear. He could think of nothing, after the first shock, but "what a joke" it was. A man in love, especially a man in the first imbecility of matrimonial bliss, is a joke at any time; but when it's your governor, Law said to himself! He gave a great roar of laughter. "Polly, by Jove!" he said; "so you've been and done it!" It had alarmed him much beforehand, and no doubt it might be tragical enough after; but for the moment it was the best joke that Law had encountered for years.

"Yes, we've been and done it," said Polly, rising and holding out her hand to him. "Come here and kiss me, my son. I am delighted to see you. It's so nice to hear a good laugh, and see a bright face. Lottie, Law, hasn't found her tongue yet. She hasn't a word to throw at a dog, much less her new mamma. But you, it's a pleasure to see you. Ah!" said Polly, with effusion, "the gentlemen for me! Ladies, they're spiteful, and they're jealous, and they're stuck up; but gentlemen does you justice. You mustn't call me Polly, however, though I forgive you the first time. You must know that I am your mamma."

Law laughed again, but it was not a pleasant laugh; and he grasped the hand which his father held out to him with a desire to crush it, if he could, which was natural enough. Law thought it a joke, it is true; but he was angry at bottom, though amused on the surface. And he did hurt his father's somewhat flabby, unworking hand. The Captain, however, would not complain. He was glad even to be met with a semblance of cordiality at such a moment. He helped Law largely to the beef, in the satisfaction of this family union, and this was a sign of anxiety which Law did not despise.

"Oh, and I assure you I mean to be a mother to you," said Polly. "It shan't be said now that you haven't anyone to look after you. *I* mean to look after you. I am not at all satisfied with some of your goings on. A gentleman shouldn't make too free with them that are beneath him. Yes, yes, Harry, darling; it's too early to begin on that point; but he shall know my mind, and *I* mean to look after him. Now this is what I call comfortable," said Mrs. Despard, looking round with a beaming smile; "quite a family party, and quite a nice tea; though the beef's dry to my taste (but I never was one for cold victuals), and everybody satisfied——"

"Lottie," said the Captain, looking up from his beef with some sternness, "you seem the only exception. Don't you think, my child, when you see everybody so happy, that you might find a word to say?"

"Oh, don't hurry her," said Polly; "we've took her by surprise. I told you not to, but you would. We'll have a nice long talk to-morrow, when she gives me over the housekeeping; and when she sees as I mean to act like a mother, why things will come right between her and me."

The Despards were not highly educated people, but yet a shiver ran

through them when Polly, unconscious, said, "We've took her by surprise." The Captain even shrank a little, and took a great deal too much mustard, and made himself cough, while Law, in spite of himself, laughed, looking across the table to the place where Lottie sat. Lottie noticed it the least of all. She heard every word they all said, and remembered every word, the most trifling; but at the moment she scarcely distinguished the meaning of them. She said, "I think, papa, if you don't mind, I will go to my room. I am rather tired; and perhaps I had better give some orders to Mary."

"Oh, never mind; never mind about Mary, if it's on my account. I shall look after her myself," said Polly. "What's good enough for the Captain is good enough for me; at least till I settle it my own way, you know. I don't want to give any trouble at all, till I can settle things my own way."

"It is not I that have to be consulted," said Captain Despard; "but if you are going to sit sulky and not say a word, I don't see—what do you think, my pet?—that it matters whether you go or stay——"

"Oh, don't mind me, Miss," said Polly. She could not look Miss Despard in the face and call her Lottie, knowing, however she might consent to waive her own rights, that Miss Despard was still Miss Despard, whatever Polly might do. Not a thing on her that was worth five shillings, not a brooch even; nothing like a bracelet; a bit of a cotton frock, no more; but she was still Miss Despard, and unapproachable. Polly, with her bracelets on each wrist, rings twinkling on her hands as she took her supper, in a blue silk, and knowing herself to be an officer's lady—Mrs. Captain Despard—with all this could not speak to her husband's daughter except as Miss. She could not understand it, but still it was so.

The little crooked hall was full of boxes when Lottie came out; and Mary stood among them, wondering how she was to get them upstairs. Perhaps she had been listening a little at the door, for Mary's consternation was as great as Lottie's. "Do you think, Miss, it's real and true? Do you think as she's married, sure? Mother wouldn't let me stay a day, if there was anything wrong; and I don't know as I'll stay anyhow," Mary said.

"Wrong? what could be wrong?" said Lottie. She was less educated in knowledge of this kind than the little maid-of-all-work. It troubled her to see the boxes littering the hall, but *she* could not carry them upstairs. For a moment the impulse to do it, or at least to help Mary in doing it, came into her mind; but, on second thoughts, she refrained. What had she to do with this new-comer into the house, who was not even a visitor, who had come to remain? Lottie went upstairs without saying any more. She went first into the little faded drawing-room, where there was no light except that which came from the window and the lamp in the Dean's Walk. It was not beautiful. She had never had any money to decorate it, to make it what it might have been, nor pretty furniture to put into it. But she sat down on her favourite little chair,

in the dark, and felt as if she had gone to sit by somebody that was dead, who had been a dear friend. How friendly and quiet the little room had been! giving her a centre for her life, a refuge for her thoughts. But all that was over. She had never known before that she had liked it or thought of it much; but now, all at once, what a gentle and pleasant shelter it had been! As Lottie thought of everything, the tears came silently and bitterly into her eyes. She herself had been ungrateful, unkind to the little old house, the venerable old place, the kind people. They had all been kind to her. She had visited her own disappointment upon them, scorning the neighbours because they were less stately than she expected them to be; visiting upon them her own discontent with her position, her own disappointment in being less important than she expected. Lottie was hard upon herself, for she had not been unkind to any one, but was, on the contrary, a favourite with her neighbours—the only girl in the place, and allowed by the old people to have a right to whims and fancies. Now, in the face of this strange, incomprehensible misfortune, she felt the difference. Her quiet old room! where kind voices had spoken to her, where *he* had come, saying such words as made her heart beat; where she had sung to him, and received those tender applauses which had been like treasure to Lottie. She seemed to see a series of past scenes like pictures rising before her. Not often had Rollo been there—yet two or three times; and Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, with her mellow brogue, and Mr. Ashford, and even the stately person of the Dean himself. She had been at home here, to receive them, whoever came. The room had never been invaded by anything that was unfriendly or unpleasing. Now—what was it that woman said of changes—making it look nice? Lottie had not understood the words when they were said, but they came back upon her now.

By-and-by she heard some one coming upstairs, and starting, rose to steal away to her own room, afraid to meet the stranger again; but no light made its appearance, and Law put in his head at the door, then seeing something moving against the window, came to her, and threw himself down on the window-seat. "They're going on so downstairs, that I couldn't stand it," said Law; "it's enough to make a fellow sick"—and then, after a pause—"Well! I told you what was coming, but you wouldn't believe me; what do you think of it now?"

"Oh, Law, what does it mean?—Are we not dreaming? Can it be true?"

"True! of course it is true. I told you what was going to happen." Then his tone softened. "Poor Lottie, it's you I'm sorry for. If you could only see yourself beside her! And where were his eyes, that he couldn't see?" Here Law paused abruptly, wondering all at once whether the difference would be as marked between his sister and the girls whom he too liked to spend his evenings with. He was sure that Emma was not like that woman; but still the thought subdued his indignation. "I say," he added hastily, "I want to give you a bit of advice. Just you give in to

her, Lottie. Fighting is no good: she has got a tongue that you couldn't stand, and the things she would say you wouldn't understand. I understand her well enough: but you wouldn't know what she meant, and it would make you angry and hurt you. Give in, Lottie. Since the governor's been so silly, she has a right. And don't you make any stand as if you could do it—for you can't. It is a great deal better not to resist——"

"What do you mean by resist? How can I resist? The house is papa's, I suppose?" said Lottie. "The thing is, I don't understand it. I can't understand it: that somebody should be coming to stay here, to be one of us, to be mixed up in everything—whom we don't know——"

"To be mistress," said Law, "that's the worst—not to be mixed up with us, but to be over us. To take everything out of your hands——"

"Do you think I care for that? I do not mind who is mistress," said Lottie, all unaware of her own characteristics. Law was wiser than she was in this respect. He shook his head.

"That's the worst," he said "she'll be mistress—she'll change everything. Oh, I know Polly well; though I suppose, for decency, I mustn't say Polly now."

"How is it you know her so well? And how did papa know her?" said Lottie. "I should have thought you never could have met such women. Ah! you told me once about—others. Law! you can't like company like that; surely, you can't like company like that! how did you get to know her?" Law was very much discomfited by this sudden question. In the midst of his sympathy and compassion for his sister, it was hard all at once to be brought to book, when he had forgotten the possibility of such a danger.

"Well, you know," he said, "fellows do; I don't know how it is—you come across some one, and then she speaks to you, and then you're forced to speak back; or perhaps it's you that speaks first—it isn't easy to tell. This was as simple as anything," Law went on, relieved by the naturalness of his own explanation. "They all work in the same house where Langton lives, my old coach, you know, before I went to old Ashford. I don't know how the governor got there. Perhaps it was the same way. Going in and out, you know day after day, why, how could you help it? And when a woman speaks to you, what can you do, but say something? That's exactly how it was."

"But, Law," she said, grasping his arm—all this conversation was so much easier in the dark—"Law, you will take care? she said she was not quite sure whether it was to be the father or the son. Ah! a woman who could say that, Law——"

"It's a lie," said Law, fiercely, "and she knows it. I never thought anything of her—never. It's a lie, if she were to swear it! Polly! why, she's thirty, she's——I give my word of honour, it's a lie."

"But, Law! oh, Law dear——"

"I know what you're going to say. I'll take care of myself; no fear

of me getting entangled," said Law briskly. Then he stopped, and, still favoured by the dark, took her hands in his. "Lottie, it's my turn now. I know you won't stand questioning, nor being talked to. But, look here—don't shilly-shally if you can care for anybody, and he'll marry you and give you a place of your own—You needn't jump up as if I had shot you. If you talk about such things to me, I may surely talk to you. And mind what I say. I don't expect you'll be able to put up with your life here——"

"I hear them stirring downstairs," said Lottie, drawing her hands out of his hold. "Don't keep me, don't hold me, Law. I cannot see her again to-night."

"You won't give me any answer," said the lad regretfully. There was real feeling in his voice—"But, Lottie, mind what I say. I don't believe you'll be able to put up with it, and if there's any one you care for and he'll marry you——"

Lottie freed herself from him violently, and fled. Even in the dark there were things that Law could not be permitted to say, or she to hear.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The Heavings of the Earthquake.

The next morning dawned very strangely on all the members of the little household. Lottie was down early, as she generally was; but the advantages of early rising were neutralised by the condition of the little maid, Mary, who was too much excited to do her work, and kept continually coming back to pour her doubts and her difficulties into Lottie's ear. "I can't get no rest till I've told mother," Mary said. "If there's anything wrong, mother won't let me stay, not a day. And even if there's nothing wrong, I don't know as I'll stay. I haven't got no fault to find with you, Miss; nor the Captain, nor even Mr. Law: though he's a dreadful bother with his boots cleaning; but to say as you're beginning as you mean to end, and then to give all that trouble! every blessed thing, I had to drag it upstairs. Mr. Law was very kind; he took up the big box—I couldn't ha' done it; but up and down, up and down, all the little boxes and the bags, and the brown paper parcels—'It saves trouble if you begins as you means to end,' she says——"

"I don't want to hear what Mrs. Despard says," said Lottie. Mrs. Despard: it was her mother's name. And though that mother had not been an ideal mother, or one of those who are worshipped in their children's memories, it is wonderful, what a gush of tender recollections came into Lottie's mind with the name. Poor mamma! she had been very kind in her way, always ready to indulge and to pardon, if indifferent to what happened in more important matters. She had never exacted anything, never worried her children about idleness or untidiness, or any

of those minor sins which generally make a small girl's life a burden to her. Lottie's mind went back to her, lying on her sofa, languid, perhaps lazy—badly dressed; yet never anything but a lady, with a kind of graciousness in her faded smile, and grace in her faded gown. Not a woman to be held in adoration, and yet—the girl sighed, but set to work to make the little brown dining-room neat, to get the table set, making up for Mary's distracted service by her own extra activity. For amid all the horrors of last night there was one which had cut Lottie very deeply, and that was the many references to the cold beef, and the bride's dislike of "cold victuals." It is inconceivable, among all the more important matters involved, how deeply wounded Lottie's pride had been by this reproach. She resolved that no one should be able to speak so to-day; and she herself put on her hat and went out to the shop on the Abbey Hill almost as soon as it had opened, that this intolerable reproach should not be in the interloper's power. She met more than one of the old Chevaliers as she came up, for most of them kept early hours and paced the terrace pavement in the morning as if it had been morning parade. They all looked at her curiously, and one or two stopped her to say "good morning." "And a fine morning it is, and you look as fresh as a flower," one of the old gentlemen said; and another laid his hand on her shoulder, patting her with a tender fatherly touch. "God bless you, my dear, the sight of you is a pleasure," said this old man. How little she had thought or cared for them, and how kind they were in her trouble! She could see that everybody knew. Lottie did not know whether she did not half resent the universal knowledge. Most likely they had known it before she did. The whole town knew it, and everybody within the Precincts. Captain Despard had got married! Such a thing had not occurred before in the memory of man. Many people believed, indeed, that there was a law against it, and that Captain Despard was liable to be turned out of his appointment. Certainly it was unprecedented; for the old Chevaliers before they came to St. Michael's had generally passed the age at which men marry. The whole scene seemed to have taken a different aspect to Lottie. Since her home had become impossible to her, it had become dear. For the first time she felt how good it was to look across upon the noble old buttresses of the Abbey, to inhabit that "retired leisure," that venerable quietness. If only that woman were not there! But that woman was there, and everything was changed. Lottie had been rudely awakened, dragged, as it were, out of her dreams. She could not think as she usually did of the meetings that were sure to come somehow in the Abbey, or on the Slopes—or count how long it would be till the afternoon or evening, when she should see him. This, though it was her life, had been pushed out of the way. She thought of all last night's remarks about the cold beef and the poor fare, and the changes that were going to be made. Would she think bacon good enough for breakfast?—would she be satisfied with the rolls, which Lottie herself felt to be a holiday indulgence? Pride, and nothing but pride, had thrown the girl

into such excesses. She could not endure those criticisms again. Her brain was hot and hazy, without having any power of thought. The confusion of last night was still in her. Would it all turn out a dream? or would the door open by-and-by and show this unaccustomed figure? Lottie did not feel that she could be sure of anything. The first to come down was Law, who had been forced from his bed for once by sympathy. Law was very kind to Lottie. "I thought I wouldn't leave you to face her by yourself," he said; "they're coming down directly." Then Lottie knew that it was no dream.

The bride came down in a blue merino dress, as blue as the silk of last night. Polly was of opinion that she looked well in blue; and it was not one of the ethereal tints that are now used, but a good solid, full blue, quite uncompromising in point of colour. And the hair on her head was piled up as if it would reach the skies, or the ceiling at least. She came down arm-in-arm with her husband, the two smiling upon each other, while Law and Lottie stood one on each side of the table with no smiles, looking very serious. It was Mrs. Despard who did the most of the conversation; for the Captain was passive, feeling, it must be allowed, somewhat embarrassed by the presence of his children, who did not embarrass her at all. But she did not think the bacon very good. She thought it badly cooked. She thought the girl could not have been well trained to send it up like that. And she was not pleased either with the rolls; but announced her intention of changing the baker as well as the butcher. "We've always gone to Willoughby's, as long as I can recollect, and I don't fancy any bread but his." Lottie did not say anything, she was nearly as silent as on the previous night; and Law, who was opposite, though he made faces at her now and then, and did his best to beguile his sister into a laugh, did not contribute much to the conversation. He got up as soon as he had swallowed his breakfast and got his books. "I'm off to old Ashford," he said.

"Where are you going, Law?—you must never get up from table without asking my leave—it is dreadful unmannerly. You have got into such strange ways; you want me to bring you back to your manners, all of you. Who are you going to?—not to Mr. Langton as you used to do—I'm glad of that."

"I don't see why you should be glad of that. I'm going to old Ashford," said Law, gloomily. "He is a much better coach than Langton. I have not anything to do to-day, Lottie; I shall be back at twelve o'clock."

"Dear me," said Mrs. Despard, "how long is Law going on going to school like a little boy? I never heard of such a thing, at his age. He should be put into something where he could earn a little money for himself, instead of costing money; a great, strong young fellow like that. I think you're all going to sleep here. You want me, as anybody can see, to wake you up, and save you from being put upon, my poor man. But I hope I know how to take care of my own husband,

and see that he gets the good of what he has, and don't just throw it away upon other folks. And I begin as I means to end," said Polly, with a little toss of her head. Law, stopped by the sound of her voice, had turned round at the door, and contemplated her with gloomy looks; but seeing it was not to come to anything bad, went away. And the bell began, and the Captain rose. His bride came to him fondly, and brushed a crumb or two off his coat and arranged the flower in his buttonhole. "Now you look quite sweet," she said with genuine enthusiasm. "I ain't going in the morning, when none but the regular folks is there, but I mean to go, my dear, in the afternoon. It's only proper respect, living in the Precincts; but you won't be long, dear? You'll come home to your poor little wife, that don't know what to do without her handsome husband? Now, won't you, dear?"

"I'll be back as fast as my legs can carry me," said the Captain. "Come and meet me, my pet. Lottie will tell you when the voluntary begins——"

"Oh, I can tell very well without Lottie," said the bride, hanging upon him till he reached the door. All these endearments had an indescribable effect upon the girl, who was compelled to stand by. Lottie turned her back to them and re-arranged the ornaments on the mantelpiece, with trembling hands, exasperated almost beyond the power of self-restraint. But when the Captain was gone, looking back in his imbecility to kiss his hand to his bride, the situation changed at once. Polly turned round, sharp and business-like, in a moment. "Ring the bell, Miss," she said, "and tell the girl to clear them things away. And then, if you will just hand me over the keys, and let me see your housekeeping things and your stores and all that, we may settle matters without any trouble. I likes to begin as I mean to end," said Polly peremptorily. Lottie stood and looked at her for a moment, her spirit rekindling, her mind rising up in arms against the idea of obedience to this stranger. But what would be the use of trying to resist? Resist! what power had she? The very pride which rebelled against submission made that submission inevitable. She could not humiliate herself by a vain struggle. Polly, who was very doubtful of the yielding of this natural adversary, and rather expected to have a struggle for her "rights," was quite bewildered by the meekness with which the proud girl, who scarcely took any notice of her, she thought, acquiesced in the orders she gave. Lottie rang the bell. She said, "You will prefer, I am sure, to give Mary her orders without me. There are not many keys, but I will go and get what I have."

"Not many keys! and you call yourself a housekeeper?" said Polly. Lottie turned away as the little maid came in, looking impertinent enough to be a match for the new mistress; but Lottie was no match for her. She went and got out her little housekeeping-book, which she had kept so neatly. She gathered the keys of the cupboards, which generally stood unlocked, for there was not so much in them that she should

lock them up. Lottie had all the instincts of a housekeeper. It gave her positive pain to hand over the symbols of office—to give up her occupation. Her heart sank as she prepared to do it. All her struggles about the bills, her anxious thought how this and that was to be paid, seemed elements of happiness now. She could not bear to give them up. The pain of this compulsory abdication drove everything else out of her head. Love, they say, is all a woman's life, but only part of a man's; yet Lottie forgot even Rollo—forgot his love and all the consolation it might bring, in this other emergency, which was petty enough, yet all-important to her. She trembled as she got together these little symbols of her domestic sovereignty. She heard the new mistress of the house coming up the stairs as she did so, talking all the way. "I never heard such impudence," Polly was saying. "Speak back to her mistress! a bit of a chit of a maid-of-all-work like that. I suppose she's been let do whatever she pleased; but she'll find out the difference." Behind Polly's voice came a gust of weeping from below, and a cry of, "I'm going to tell mother;" thus hostilities had commenced all along the line.

"I can't think how ever you got on with a creature like that," said Polly, throwing herself down in the easy chair. "She don't know how to do a single thing, as far as I can see; but some folks never seem to mind. She shan't stay here not a day longer than I can help. I've given her warning on the spot. To take impudence from a servant the very first day! But that's always the way when things are let go; the moment they find a firm hand over them there's a to-do. To be sure it wasn't to be looked for that you could know much, Miss, about managing a house."

"Mary is a very good girl," said Lottie hastily. "She has always done what I told her. Here are the keys of the cupboards, since you wish for them; but there are not any stores to lock away. I get the things every week, just enough to use——"

"And don't lock them up!" Polly threw up her hands. "That's one way of housekeeping; but how should you know any better, poor thing, brought up like that! I'm sure I don't mean to be hard upon you; but you should have thought a bit of your papa, and not have wasted his money. However, that's all over now. A man wants a nice 'ome to come back to, he wants a nice dinner on the table, he wants somebody that can talk to him, to keep him out of mischief. Oh, I know very well the Captain's been fond of having his fling. I ain't one of the ignorant ones, as don't know a man's ways. And I like that sort much the best myself. I like a man to be a man, and know what's what. But you'll soon see the difference, now that he's got some one to amuse him, and some one to make him comfortable at home. So these are all, Miss Lottie? And what's this? oh, a book! I don't think much of keeping books. You know how much you has to spend, and you spend it; that's my way."

Lottie made no reply. She felt it to be wiser for herself, but no

doubt it was less respectful to Polly, who paused now and then for a reply, then went on again, loving to hear herself talk, yet feeling the contempt involved in this absence of all response. At last she cried angrily, "Have you lost your tongue, Miss, or do you think as I'm not good enough to have an answer, though I'm your papa's wife?"

"I beg your pardon," said Lottie; "I—don't know what to say to you. We don't know each other. I don't understand—— Don't you see," she cried suddenly, unable to restrain herself, "that since you came into the house you have done nothing but—find fault with all my —arrangements—" (these mild words came with the utmost difficulty; but Lottie was too proud to quarrel). "You can't think that I could like that. I have done my best, and if you try as I have done, you will find it is not so easy. But I don't want to defend myself; that is why I don't say anything. There can be no good in quarrelling, whether you think me a bad housekeeper or not."

"I ain't so sure of that," said Polly. "Have a good flare-up, and be done with it, that's my way. I don't hold with your politeness, and keeping yourself to yourself. I'd rather quarrel than be always bursting with spite and envy, like some folks. It stands to reason as you must hate me, taking things out of your hands; and it stands to reason as I should think more of my own husband than of keeping up your brother and you in idleness. But for all that, and though we might fight now and then—everybody does, I don't care nothing for a girl as is always the same—I don't see why we shouldn't get on neither. The Captain says as you've a very good chance of a husband yourself. And though I'm just about your own age, I've had a deal of experience. I know how to bring a man to the point, if he's shilly-shallying, or won't speak up like a man, as a girl has a right to expect."

"Oh! stop, stop, stop!" cried Lottie, wild with horror. She cast a hurried glance round, to see what excuse she could make for getting away. Then she seized eagerly upon her music which lay on the old square piano. "I must go to my lesson," she said.

"Your lesson! Are you having lessons too? Upon my word! Oh, my poor husband! my poor Captain! No wonder as he has nothing but cold beef to eat," said Polly, with all the fervour of a deliverer, finding out one misery after another. "And if one might make so bold as to ask, Miss, who is it as has the honour to give lessons to you?"

"The Signor—Mr. Rossinetti," Lottie added, after a moment. It seemed desecration to talk of any of the familiar figures within the Abbey precincts by their familiar titles to this intruder.

"Oh! I'm not so ignorant as not to know who the Signor is. That will be half-a-guinea, or at the least seven and six a lesson!" she said, raising her hands in horror. Oh, my poor 'usband! This is how his money goes! Miss," said Polly, severely, "you can't expect as I should put up with such goings on. I have your papa to think of, and I won't see him robbed—no, not whatever you may do. For I call that robbery,

just nothing else. Half-a-guinea a lesson, and encouraging Law to waste his time! I can't think how you can do it: with that good, dear, sweet, confiding man letting you have your own way, and suspecting nothing," cried Polly, clasping her hands. Then she got up suddenly. "I declare," she cried, "church is near over, and me not ready to go out and meet him! I can't go out a figure, in a common rag like this, and me a bride. I must put on my silk. Of course, he wants to show me off a bit before his friends. I'll run and get ready, and we can talk of this another time."

Thus Lottie escaped for the moment. She was asked a little later to see if Mrs. Despard's collar was straight, and to pin on her veil. "Do I look nice?" said Polly triumphant, and at the same time mollified by the services which Lottie rendered without objection. She had put on her "blue silk" and the bonnet with the orange-blossoms, and neckties enough to stock a shop. "Perhaps, as there's nothing ordered, and I mean to make a change with the tradespeople, the Captain and me won't come back to dinner," said Polly. "There's your favourite cold beef, Miss, for Law and you." Lottie felt that she began to breathe when, rustling and mincing, her strange companion swept out, in the face of all the people who were dispersing from matins, to meet her husband. Polly liked the wondering encounter of all their eyes. With her blue silk sweeping the pavement after her, and her pink parasol, and the orange-blossoms on her bonnet, her figure descending the Dean's Walk alone, while all the others issued out of the Abbey doors, was conspicuous enough. She was delighted to find that everybody looked at her, and even that some stood still to watch her, looking darkly at her finery. These were the people who were jealous, envious of her fine clothes and her happiness, or jealous of her handsome husband, who met her presently, but who perhaps was not so much delighted to see her amidst all his fellow-Chevaliers as she thought. Captain Despard was not a man of very fine perceptions; but though his blooming young wife was a splendid object indeed beside the dark, little old figure of Mrs. Temple, he had seen enough to feel that the presence of the old lady brought out into larger prominence something which the younger lacked. But he met her with effusive delight, and drew her hand within his arm, and thus they disappeared together. Outside the Precincts there was no need to make any comparison, and Polly's brilliancy filled all hearts with awe.

When Law returned, he found Lottie seated in her little chair, with her face hidden in her hands. It was not that she was crying, as he feared at first. The face she raised to him was crimson with excitement. "Oh, Law!" she said, "Law, Law!" Lottie had got beyond the range of words. After a while she told him all the events of the morning, which did not look half so important when they were told, and they tried to lay their heads together and think what was best to be done. But what could anyone do? Mary could scarcely put the remnants of

the cold beef on the table, for her eagerness to tell that she had been to mother, and mother would not hear of her staying. "Places isn't so hard to get as all that, for a girl with a good character," she said. When she was gone, Lottie looked piteously at her brother.

"What kind of a place could I get?" she said. "What am I fit for? Oh, Law! I think it is a mistake to be brought up a lady. I never thought it before, but I do now. How can we go on living here? and where are we to go?"

"That's what I always said," said Law. He was horribly grave, but he had not a word to say except that he had got a match at football, and perhaps might stay and sup with the fellows afterwards. "I'm just as well out of the way, for what can I do for you? only make things worse," he said. And though he had been so kind and sympathetic at first, Law stole away, glad to escape, and left Lottie alone, to bear it as she might. She had no lesson that day, though she had pretended to have one. She would not go to the Abbey, where the new member of the family meant to appear, she knew. Lottie stayed in the familiar room which was hers no longer, until the silence became too much for her, and she felt that any human voice would be a relief. She went out in the afternoon, when all seemed quiet, when everybody had gone to the Abbey for the evening service. There would be nobody about, and it seemed to Lottie that the shame was upon her, that it was she who must shrink from all eyes. Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, however, knocking on the window violently, instantly gave her to understand that this was impracticable. The girl tried to resist, being afraid of herself, afraid of what she might say, and of what might be said to her. But as she hurried on, Mrs. O'Shaughnessy's maid rushed after her. Lottie had to go to her old friend, though very reluctantly. Mrs. O'Shaughnessy had a bad cold. She was sitting wrapped up in a shawl, and a visitor with something to tell was beyond price to her. "Come and tell me all about it, then!" she cried, "me poor darlin'!" enveloping Lottie in her large embrace. "And tell the Major, Sally, and let nobody come in." The Major came instantly to the call, and Lottie tried to tell her story to the kind couple who sat on either side of her, with many an exclamation.

"I knew that was what it would come to," Mrs. O'Shaughnessy said.

"And I never thought Despard (saving your presence, my dear) could have been such a fool!" cried the Major.

"Oh sure, Major, you're old enough to know that every man is a fool where a woman's concerned."

But what was Lottie to do? They petted her and condoled with her, soothing her with their sympathy, and all the tender words they could think of; but they could throw no light upon one point: what could the girl do? Nothing, but put up with it. They shook their heads, but could give her no comfort. If Law had but been doing something instead of idling all his time away! But then Law was not doing anything. What was he good for, any more than Lottie?

"Mary can get another place. Her mother will not let her stay, and she can get another place, she says; but here are two of us, Law and I, and we are good for nothing!" cried Lottie. How her thoughts were altered from the time when she thought it necessary to stay at home, to do no visible work, for the credit of the family! Lottie was not young enough to feel that it was necessary to be consistent. "We are young and strong and able to work, but we are good for nothing!" she said. And they both looked at her blankly, not knowing what to say.

By-and-by Lottie escaped again into the open air, notwithstanding their anxious invitation that she should stay with them. She was too wretched to stay, and there had come upon her a longing to see another face in which there might be comfort. As she went out she almost walked into Captain Temple's arms, who was walking slowly along looking up at her window. The old man took both her hands into his. "My poor child!" he said. He was not so frankly inquisitive as the good people she had just left, but he drew her hand through his arm and walked with her, bending over her.

"I do not want to tempt you from your duty, my dear; you'll do what is right, I am sure you will do what is right. But I can't bear to think you are in trouble, and we so near. And my wife," said the old man slightly faltering, "my wife thinks so, too." He was not quite so sure of his wife. She had the restraining effect upon her husband which a more reserved and uncommunicative mind has over an impulsive one. He knew what he would like to do, but he was not sure of her, and this put hesitation into his speech.

"Oh! Captain Temple," cried Lottie, moved at last to tears, "what am I to do? If I cannot bear it, what am I to do?"

"Come and speak to my wife," he said; "come, dear, and see my wife. She can't talk about everything as I do, but she has more sense than anyone, and knows the world. Come with me, Lottie, and see what Mrs. Temple says."

He thought the sight of the girl in her trouble would be enough, and that his wife would certainly say what it was on his own lips to say. Just then, however, there was a sound of doors opening, and old Wykeham came out and looked upon the world with a defiant countenance from the south door of the Abbey, which was a sign that service was over; and the notes of the voluntary began to peal out into the air. Lottie drew her arm from that of her old friend—she could not bear the eyes of the crowd. "Another time, another time; but I must go now," she cried, escaping from him and turning towards the Slopes. The old Captain's first impulse was to follow. He stood for a moment gazing after her as she sped along, slim and swift and young, up the deserted road. It was beginning to grow dark, and the evening was colder than it had been yet. Where was she going? To her favourite haunt on the Slopes to get the wind in her face; to let her thoughts go, like birds, into the wide space and distance? If that had been all! The old man

thought of an alternative which filled him with alarm. He took a step after her, and then he paused again, and shaking his head, turned back, meeting all the people as they streamed out of the Abbey. Poor child! if she did meet *him* there, what then? It would comfort her to see her lover; and if he was good, as the anxious old Chevalier hoped, had not the lover more power to save her than all the world? There was no question of taking Lottie from her father and mother, separating her from her home. If this young man were to offer her a home of her own, where could there be so good a solution to the problem? Captain Temple turned and walked home with a sigh. It was not his way of delivering Lottie, but perhaps it was the way that would be most for her happiness, and who was he that he should interfere? He let her go to her fate with a sigh.

CHAPTER XXX.

Lottie's Fate.

Lottie went up the Dean's Walk hastily, feeling as if she had taken flight. And she was taking flight. She could not bear to meet the people coming from the Abbey, among whom no doubt her father and his wife would be. Lottie was scarcely aware that there was anything else in her mind. She hurried to the Slopes as the natural refuge of her trouble. The wind blowing fresh in her face, the great sweep of distance, the air and the clouds, the familiar rustle of the trees, seemed to have become part of her, a necessity of her living. And the Slopes were almost deserted now. In October the night comes early, the afternoon is short, even before the winds become chill; already it was darkening, though the afternoon service was but newly over. The trees were beginning to lose their gorgeous apparel; every breeze shook down hosts of leaves, shreds of russet brown and pale gold; the wind was wistful and mournful, with a sigh in it that promised rain. Lottie saw nobody about. She stole through the trees to her favourite corner, and leaned upon the low parapet, looking over the familiar scene. She was so familiar with it, every line; and yet it seemed to her to-night like scenery in a theatre which by-and-by would collapse and split asunder, and give place to something different. It would vanish from her sight, and in place of it there would appear the dim background of one of the little rooms at home, with a figure in a blue gown relieved against it, tossing about a mountain of braids and plaits. Lottie did not feel sure that this figure would not appear at her very side, lay an imperative hand on her shoulder, and order her to give up the secrets of her own being. Thus she carried her care within her. She stood leaning over the parapet, with the trees rustling around, scarcely aware what she was thinking of. Did she expect anyone? She would have said, No. The night was overcast and growing dismal, why should she expect anyone? What reason

could he have for coming out here? He could have no instinctive knowledge of her misery, to bring him, and he had no longer that excuse of his cigar after dinner as on the happy nights when the air was still like summer. No! it was only for the stillness, only for the air, only to fling her troublesome thoughts out to the horizon and empty her mind, and thus feel it possible to begin again, that she had come. And never had that stillness been so still before. By-and-by this scene would melt away, and it would be the little dining-room in the Lodge, with the white tablecloth and the lamp lighted upon it. She had been weary of her home, she had half despised it; but never had she been disgusted, afraid of it, never loathed the thought of going back to it before. And she could not talk to anybody about this; they were all very kind, ready to be sorry for her, to do anything they could for her, but she could not bear their sympathy to-night.

All at once, in the silence which was so full of the whisper of the leaves and the sighs of the wind, that she had not heard any footstep, there came a voice close to her elbow which made Lottie start.

"Is it really you, Miss Despard? I had almost given up hopes;—and alone! I thought you were never to be alone again?" said Rollo, with pleasure in his voice.

How it startled her! She looked round upon him with so much fright in her eyes that he was half vexed, half angered. Was it possible that Lottie after all was just like the rest, pretending to be astonished by his appearance when she knew as well——

"You surely are not surprised to see me?" he said, with a short laugh.

"I did not think of seeing you," she said quietly, and looked away from him again.

Rollo was angry, yet he was touched by something in her tone; and there must be something to cause this sudden change. She had always been so frank and simple in her welcome of him, always with a light of pleasure on her face when he came in sight; but she would not so much as let him see her face now. She looked round with that first start, then turned again and resumed her dreamy gaze into the night. And there was dejection in every line of her figure as she stood dimly outlined against the waning light. Suddenly there came into Rollo's mind a recollection that he had heard something to account for this, without accusing her of petty pretence or affectation.

"Something has happened," he said, with a sense of relief which surprised himself. "I remember now. I fear you are not happy about it."

"No," she said, with a sigh. Then Lottie made a little effort to recover herself; perhaps he would not care about her troubles. "It has been a great shock," she said, "but perhaps it may not be so bad after a while."

"Tell me," said Rollo; "you know how much interest I take in everything that concerns you. Surely, Miss Despard, after this long

time that we have been seeing each other, you know that? Won't you tell me? I cannot bear to see you so sad, so unlike yourself."

"Perhaps that is the best thing that could happen," said Lottie, "that I should be unlike myself. I wish I could be like some one with more sense; I have been so foolish! Everybody knows that we are poor; I never concealed it, but I never thought—— Oh! how silly we have been, Law and I! I used to scold him, but I never saw that I was just the same myself. We ought to have learned to do something, if it were only a trade. We are both young and strong, but we are good for nothing, not able to do anything. I used to scold him: but I never thought that I was just as bad myself."

"Don't say so, don't say so! You were quite right to scold him; men ought to work. But *you*," cried Rollo with real agitation, "it is not to be thought of. You! don't speak of such a thing. What is the world coming to when you talk of working, while such a fellow as I——"

"Ah! that is quite different," said Lottie. "You are rich, or at least you are the same as if you were rich; but we are really poor, we have no money: and everything we have, it is papa's. I suppose he has a right to do whatever he likes with it; it seems strange, but I suppose he has a right. And then, what is to become of us? How could I be so silly as not to think of that before? It is all my own fault; don't think I am finding fault with papa, Mr. Ridsdale. I suppose he has a right, and I don't want to grumble; it only—seems natural—to tell you." Lottie did not know what an admission she was making. She sighed again into that soft distant horizon, then turned to him with a smile trembling about her lips. It was a relief to tell him—she could speak to him as she could not speak to Captain Temple or Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, though she had known them so much longer. "Perhaps I am only out of temper," she said. She could not but feel more light of heart standing beside him with nobody near; they seemed to belong to each other so.

"How good, how sweet of you to say so," he cried. "Then treat me as if it were natural; come and sit down—nobody will interrupt us—and tell me everything I want to know."

They had met together in Lottie's little drawing-room before, in the eye of day, and three or four times under Lady Caroline's eye; but never before like this in the twilight, all alone in the world as it were, two of them and no more. Lottie hesitated for a moment; but what could be wrong in it? There was nobody to disturb them, and her heart was so full; and to talk to him was so pleasant. She seemed able to say more to him than to any other. He understood her at half a word, whereas to the others she had to say everything, to say even more than she meant before they saw what she meant. She sat down accordingly in the corner of the seat and told him all that had happened; herself beginning to see some humour in it as she told the story, half laughing one moment,

half crying the next. And Rollo went into it with all his heart. All their meetings had produced their natural effect; for the last fortnight he had felt that he ought to go away, but he had not gone away. He could not deprive himself of her, of their intercourse, which was nothing yet implied so much, those broken conversations, and the language of looks, that said so much more than words. Never, perhaps, had his intercourse with any girl been so simple yet so unrestrained. If the old Captain sometimes looked at him with suspicion, he was the only one who did so; and Lottie had neither suspicion nor doubt of him, nor had any question as to his "intentions" arisen in her mind. She told him her grief now, not dully, with the heavy depression that cannot be moved, but with gleams of courage, of resolution, even of fun, unable to resist the temptation of Polly's absurdity, seeing it now as she had not been able to see it before. "I never knew before," she said fervently, "what a comfort it was to talk things over—but then, whom could I talk them over with? Law, who thinks it best not to think, never to mind—but sometimes one is obliged to mind: or Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, whom I cannot say everything to—— or;—Mr. Ridsdale!" said Lottie, in alarm—"pray, pray forgive me if I have bored you. I have been pouring out everything to you. I never thought—I did not intend——"

"Don't tell me that," he said. "I hoped you did intend to confide in me, to trust to my sympathy. Who can be so much interested? to whom can it be so important——?" He leaned forward closer to her, and Lottie instinctively drew away from him a hairsbreadth; but she thought that quite natural too, as natural as that she should be able to speak to him better than to anyone else. They had both made the whole avowal of their hearts in saying these words; but it had not been done in words which frightened either or changed their position towards each other. Meanwhile she was content enough, quieted by the sense of leaning her trouble upon him, while he was gradually growing into agitation. Lottie had got all her emergency required—his sympathy, his support, the understanding that was so dear to her. After all her trouble she had a moment of ease; her heart was no longer sore, but soothed with the balm of his tender pity and indignation.

But that which calmed Lottie threw Rollo into ever increasing agitation. A man who has said so much as that to a girl, especially to one who is in difficulty and trouble, is bound even to himself to say more. The crisis began for him where for her it momentarily ended. To love her and as good as tell her so, to receive, thus ingenuously given, that confession of instinctive reliance upon him which was as good as a betrayal of her love; and to let her go and say nothing more—could a man do that and yet be a man? Rollo was not a man who had done right all the days of his life. He had been in very strange company, and had gone through many an adventure; but he was a man whom vice had never done more than touch. Even among people of bad morals he had not known how to abandon the instincts of honour; and in such an

emergency what was he to do? Words came thronging to his lips, but his mind was distracted with his own helplessness. What had he to offer? how could he marry? he asked himself with a kind of despair. Yet something must be thought of, something suggested. "Lottie," he said after that strange pause—"Lottie—I cannot call you Miss Despard any more, as if I were a stranger. Lottie, you know very well that I love you. I am as poor as you are, but I cannot bear this. You must trust to me for everything—you must—Lottie, you are not afraid to trust yourself to me—you don't doubt me?" he cried. His mind was driven wildly from one side to another. Marry! how could he marry in his circumstances? Was it possible that there was anything else that would answer the purpose, any compromise? His heart beat wildly with love and ardour and shame. What would she say? Would she understand him, though he could not understand himself?

"Mr. Ridsdale!" cried Lottie, shrinking back from him a little. She covered her face with her hands and began to cry, being overcome with so many emotions, one heaped on another. At another moment she would not have been surprised; she would have been able to lift her eyes to the glow of the full happiness which, in half-light, had been for weeks past the illumination of her life. But for the moment it dazzled her. She put up her hands between her and that ecstasy of light.

As for Rollo, very different were the thoughts in his mind. He thought Lottie as wise as himself: he thought she had investigated his words; had not found in them the one that is surety for all, and shrank from him. Shame overwhelmed him: the agony of a mind which was really honest and a heart which was full of tenderness, yet found themselves on the verge of dishonour. "Lottie!" he cried with anguish in his voice, "you do not understand me—you will not listen to me. Do not shrink as if I meant any harm."

Then she uncovered her face, and he saw dimly through the twilight a countenance all trembling with emotion and happiness and astonishment. "Harm!" she said, with wonder in her voice—"harm!" His heart seemed to stand still, and all his confused thinkings broken off in the unspeakable contrast between the simplicity of her innocence thinking no evil, and the mere knowledge in his mind which, if nothing more, made guilt possible. Such a contrast shamed and horrified, and filled with an adoration of penitence, the man who might have drawn her into evil, ambiguously, had it been possible. He found himself with one knee on the cold gravel, before he knew, pressing his suit upon her with passion. "Lottie, you must marry me, you must be my wife, you must let me be the one to work, to take care of you, to protect you from all trouble," he cried. But what did Lottie want with those more definite words which he had thought she missed and waited for? Had she not known his secret long ago before he ever spoke a word to her? Had she not been led delicately, tenderly, step by step, through infinite dreams and visions, towards this climax? She cried with happiness and trouble, and the sense of deliverance.

"Oh, why should you kneel to me?" she said. 'Do you think it needs *that*?" While he, more happy than ever he had been in his life, alarmed, disturbed, shaken out of all his habits and traditions, held her fast, like a new-found treasure, and lavished every tender word upon her that language could supply. He owed her a million apologies, of not one of which Lottie was conscious. How could it have been possible for her to suppose that even for a second, in his inmost thoughts, he had been less than reverent of her? And he—had he meant any harm? He did not think he had meant any harm; yet how, in the name of heaven, was he to marry—how was he to marry—in his present circumstances? While he was pouring out upon Lottie his love and worship, telling her how she had gathered to herself day by day all his thoughts and wishes, this question rose up again in his heart.

"I know," said Lottie, very low—her voice still trembling with the first ecstasy of feeling. It was like the dove's voice, all tenderness and pathos, coming out of her very heart. "I guessed it long—oh, long ago——"

"How did you do that? Whisper, darling—tell me—when did you first think——?"

Is not this the A B C of lovers? and yet her tone implied a little more than the happy divining of the easy secret. She laughed softly—a variety of music in his ear—the two faces were so close.

"You did not think I knew anything about it. I saw you—looking up at my window—the very night of the wedding. Do you remember?" Again Lottie's low happy laugh broke into the middle of her words. "I could not think what it meant. And then another time before I knew you—and then—— You did not suppose I saw you. I could not believe it," she said, with a soft sigh of content. Laugh or sigh, what did it matter, they meant the same: the delight of a discovery which was no discovery—the happy right of confessing a consciousness which she dared not have betrayed an hour ago—of being able to speak of it all: the two together, alone in all the world, wanting nothing and no one. This was what Lottie meant. But her disclosures struck her lover dumb. What would she say if she knew his real object then? A prima donna who was to make his fortune—a new voice to be produced in an opera! He shuddered as he drew her closer to him, with terror—with compunction, though he had meant no harm. And he loved her now if he did not love her then; with all his heart now—all the more tenderly, he thought, that she had mistaken him, that she had been so innocently deceived.

By this time it had got dark, though they did not observe it; yet not quite dark, for it is rarely dark out of doors under the free skies, as it is within four walls. It was Lottie who suddenly awoke to this fact with a start.

"It must be late—I must go home," she said. And when she looked about among the ghostly trees which waved and bent overhead, sombre

and colourless in the dark—she thought, with a thrill of horror, that hours must have passed since she came here. Rollo too was slightly alarmed. They were neither of them in a condition to measure time; and though so much had happened, it had flown like a moment. They came out from among the trees in the happy gloom, arm-in-arm. Nobody could recognise them, so dark as it was—and indeed nobody was in the way to recognise them—and the Abbey clock struck as they emerged upon the Dean's Walk, reassuring them. Rollo was still in time for dinner, though Lottie might be too late for tea; and the relief of discovering that it was not so late as they thought gave them an excuse for lingering. He walked to the Lodges with her, and then she turned back with him; and finally they strayed round the Abbey in the darkness, hidden by it, yet not so entirely hidden as they thought. Only one little jar came to the perfect blessedness of this progress homeward.

"Shall you tell them?" Lottie whispered, just before she took leave of her lover, with a movement of her hand towards the Deanery.

This gave Rollo a *serrement du cœur*. He replied hastily, "Not to-night," with something like a shiver, and then he added, "Where shall I see you to-morrow?"

This question struck Lottie with the same shock and jar of feeling. Would not he come and claim her to-morrow? This was what she had thought. She did not know what to reply, and a sudden sensation of undefined trouble—of evil not yet so entirely over as she hoped—came into her mind; but he added, before she could speak—

"In the old place—that blessed corner which I love better than any other in the world. Will you come while everybody is at the Abbey, Lottie? for we must talk over everything."

This melted the little momentary vexation away, and she promised. And thus they parted perforce—opposite Captain Despard's door. How glad Lottie was that the door was open! It stood open all through the summer, and the habits of the summer were scarcely over. By the light in the dining-room downstairs and the sound of the voices she divined that tea was not yet over. But she was not able to encounter Mrs. Despard to-night. She did not want to see anyone. Her heart was still so full of delicious tumult, her eyes of sweet tears. She had gone out so sorrowful, so indignant, not knowing what was to become of her. And now she knew what was to become of her—the most beautiful, happy fate. He had said he was poor. What did it matter if he was poor? Was she not used to that? Lottie knew, and said to herself with secret joy, that she was the right wife for a poor man. He might have got the noblest of brides, and she would not have been so fit for him; but *she* was fit for that post if ever a young woman was. She would take care of the little he had, which one might be sure he would never do himself—he was too generous, too kind for that; Lottie loved him for his prodigality, even while she determined to control it. She would take care of him and do everything for him, as no woman used to

wealth could do. And she would spur him on so that he should do great things—things which he had not done heretofore, only because he had not stimulus enough. He should have stimulus enough now, with a wife who would exult in all he did, and support him with sympathy and help. It was not any passive position that she mapped out for herself. She knew what it meant to be poor, far better than Rollo did. And she did not mind it. Why should she mind it? She had been used to it all her life. She would not care what she did. But he should never have to blush for his wife as a drudge. She would never forget her position, and his position, which was so much greater than hers. This was the first time that Lottie thought of his position. She did so now with a heightening of colour, and louder throb of her heart. By this time she was sitting in her own room without even a candle, glad of the seclusion and of the darkness in which she could think, unbetrayed even to herself. Her heart gave a bound, and a flush came to her cheek. There could be no doubt now about her position. No one could dream, no one could think that Rollo's wife was ever to be looked down upon. This gave her a distinct thrill of pleasure; and then she passed it by, to return to a dearer subject—Himself! how anxious he had been! as if it were possible she could have resisted his love. He had wooed her, she thought, as if she had been a princess—doubling Lottie's happiness by doing in this respect the thing she felt to be most right and fit, though, oh! so unnecessary in respect to herself! Could he really have any doubt how it would turn out? The thought of this humility in her hero brought tears of love and happiness to Lottie's eyes. Was she the same girl who had sat here in gloom and darkness only last night, wondering what was to become of her? But how was she to know how soon fate would unfold like a flower, and show her what was in store for her? How happy she was—how good, how thankful to God—how charitable to others! She could have gone downstairs and said something kind even to Polly, had it not been for fear of betraying herself. Everything that was tender and sweet blossomed out in her heart. She was so happy. Is not that the moment in which the heart is most pure, most kind, most humble and tender? God's hand seemed to be touching her, blessing her—and she in her turn was ready to bless all the world.

SHE CAME DOWNSTAIRS ALL WHITE AND SHINING.

THE

CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

DECEMBER, 1878.

Within the Precincts.

CHAPTER XXXI.

What Other People Thought.

THE appearance of the new Mrs. Despard in the Abbey made a very great impression. The brilliancy of her blue silk and the bushiness of her orange-blossoms were calculated to strike awe into all beholders. There was scarcely a lady within the Precincts who did not feel herself personally insulted by the appearance of the milliner girl flaunting in her bridal finery and taking her place by right among them. As for the wives of the Chevaliers, their indignation was too great for words. Mingled curiosity and enmity had brought them out in larger numbers than usual, to see the creature, if she was so lost to every feeling of shame as to show herself; and it is scarcely necessary to say that Polly was in that particular entirely lost to every feeling of shame. She came in with

her Captain, clinging to his arm, and whispering to him, even in the sacred quiet of the Abbey, and as the pair were late, and almost the entire congregation had assembled, nothing was wanting to the full enjoyment of her triumph. Polly felt, when she raised her head, after that momentary homage to the sacred place which even in her state of excitement she felt bound to make, that one object of her life was attained, that everybody was staring at her, and that in her blue silk she was more the centre of regard than the Dean himself under his canopy, or the Minor Canon just about to begin the service, who perceptibly paused, in acknowledgment of the little rustle and commotion which accompanied her entrance. The feelings of the ladies among whom this intruder pushed her way may be imagined. It was all that Mrs. O'Shaughnessy could do, she said afterwards, to refrain from throwing her hymn-book at the head of the jaunty Captain, as he handed his bride into her place, before taking his own among his brother Chevaliers. The ladies in the Abbey were divided from their partners, being placed in a lower row, and to see the Captain pass on to his stall with a swing of elation in his step after handing his bride to her seat, was enough to make any veteran blaspheme. Why should a man be so proud of himself because he has got a new wife? The imbecile glow of vanity and self-congratulation which in such circumstances comes over the countenance, nay, the entire person, even of the wisest, conveys exasperation to every looker-on. The sentiment of indignation, however, against Captain Despard was mingled with pity; but scarcely even contempt sufficed to soften the feeling with which Polly in her blue silk was universally regarded. Polly was an intruder, an aggressor. The very way in which she tossed her head upwards with its bristling crown of artificial flowers was an offence. The ladies might have their little differences now and then, and it was an undoubted fact that Mrs. Dalrymple, for instance, who was very well connected, had never been able to endure Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, who had no connections at all; but now they all clung together as with one impulse. They crowded upon each other in the seat, so as to leave a clear space between them and Polly, who, unabashed, took full advantage of it, and spread out her flounces, her blue silken skirts around her, with a rustle of defiance. Mrs. Temple was the one who was left next to Mrs. Despard. This lady, who took no notice at first, soon roused up, and putting on her spectacles, looked very seriously at the intruder. Polly faced round upon her, with dauntless readiness, but Mrs. Temple's look was so serious, that even Polly felt somewhat discomfited. She felt this new observer's eyes upon her all the time. "Who was that old woman who stared at me so?" she asked, scarcely taking the trouble to whisper, as her husband led her round the nave while the voluntary was being played. "That! that's the wife of an old idiot who gives himself no end of airs," said the Captain. "I thought as much," said Polly, tossing her head, "but she'll find I can stare just as well as she can. Two can play at that game." She spoke so loudly that some of

the people near said, "Hush-sh!" The Signor was just then playing a very delicate cadenza in the minor key.

Mrs. Temple took her old husband's arm without a word, and went straight home. He had not himself been at the service, but met her at the door; where he too saw the bride in her blue silk. The old Captain did nothing but shake his head. He could not trust himself to speak. "What are things coming to?" he said at last, as they got within their own door. "When that young fellow was made a Chevalier, I said nothing could come of it but mischief to the community." Captain Despard, being only fifty, was a young fellow to this veteran. "Never mind the community," said Mrs. Temple, which was a bold thing to say. It was getting late in the October afternoon, and within the little sitting-rooms of the Lodges it seemed dark, coming in even from the grey afternoon skies outside. Mrs. Temple rang for the lamp before she went upstairs to take off her bonnet. She was very full of thought, and sighed as she went. Her own girl, for whom she would so gladly have died, was gone, leaving father and mother desolate—and here was another poor girl who lived, but had no one to care for her. Strange are the decrees of Providence. Mrs. Temple sighed as she came downstairs again to where her old Captain sat gazing at the lamp with a sorrowful face. "Yes, my dear," he said as she came in, "you were right to say never mind the community. After all, I suppose there is no community in the world that has not its black sheep. Nobody will be so foolish as to confound *us* with such a fellow; but when I think of that poor girl——"

"That is what I have been thinking of," said Mrs. Temple; "but perhaps," she added, still unwilling to betray her interest in Lottie, that interest which was half opposition, "perhaps she may not feel it so much as we suppose."

"Feel it! I have not liked to say very much about her, my dear. She reminds me so of our own —— and I know you could not bear to talk of that," said the good Captain, innocent of the fact that he had talked of little else for months past. "But if you only knew her better! There is something in her walk—in the turn of her head—that so reminds me—but I never liked to say much about it. You must not think she does not feel it. I met her and was talking with her just before I came for you. But for leaving you alone I should have taken her for a walk; it would have done her good. I believe she rushed off to the Slopes after all."

"I do not think she would get much good on the Slopes," said Mrs. Temple, thinking of the little wind of gossip about Mr. Rollo Ridsdale which had begun to breathe about the Lodges.

"She would get fresh air—and quiet; she likes that; she is a very thoughtful girl, my dear—very serious, just like our own poor ——. You must forgive me if I am always seeing resemblances. Lottie is very fond of the twilight. I have gone with her so often I know her tastes. Many

a time I have done the same with ——. When I feel her little arm in mine, I could almost think sometimes that other days have come back."

The shadow of Mrs. Temple's cap quivered on the wall. The thought of the little arm in his, the other days, which this simple touch brought back, was not sweet but terrible to her. A film floated before her eyes, and something choking and intolerable rose in her throat. "I do not suppose," she said hastily, "that a girl brought up like that can mind as one thinks."

The Captain shook his head. "I wish you knew her better," he said, with that soft answer which turns away irritation. The servant-maid came in with the tray at this moment, and Mrs. Temple began to pour out the tea. She was a little tired, having had many things to do that day, and it occurred to her suddenly that to lean back in her easy-chair as the Captain was doing, and to have her cup of tea brought to her, would be sweet. To have some one to wait upon her tenderly and read her wishes in her eyes, and divine her thoughts before they came to her lips, that would be sweet. But could anyone do that except a child, could anything but love do it, and that sacred influence which is in the blood, the same blood running in the different veins of parent and child? These thoughts went through her mind without anybody being the wiser. She gave her husband his tea, and sat down in her turn to rest a little. There was nothing said in the still little room. The two together, did not they know all each other's thoughts and wishes and recollections? They were old, and what could happen to them except the going out to the Abbey, the coming in to tea? But if there had been three instead of two—and one young, with all a dawning world before her feet—everything would have borne a very different aspect. Ah! Mrs. Temple moved quickly, as she had the habit of doing when that recollection, always present to her mind, struck suddenly like a new blow. And here was a creature, helpless, forlorn, without a mother to fly to. The mother who had no child stood doubtful between earth and heaven, asking, speechless, what she was to do: pass by on the other side as if there was no mother in her? or pardon God for taking her child, and hold out her hand to His? She did not know what to do. Things were not easy for her as for her husband. It was cruel of this girl even to live, to pass by a poor woman's windows who had lost her child; yet what was the woman to do when this creature who was living, who was an offence to her, was in trouble? Let her sink and never hold out a hand? But what then would the other girl in heaven think of her mother? Mrs. Temple was torn by this conflict of which she gave no sign, while perhaps the old Captain in his kind and simple heart, yearning over the young creature who was so helpless and desolate, was unjust to his wife and thought her less than kind.

And it was not only in Captain Temple's house that Polly's appearance was the cause of excitement. The Signor put his hand upon the arm of his young assistant as they went out together by the north door.

"Did you see them?" he said, with meaning. Young Purcell was pale with excitement. He had done nothing but watch Polly promenading through the nave on her husband's arm, and the very fact of Lottie's superiority to himself made him feel with more horror the impossibility of any harmony between her and Polly, whom he considered so much inferior to himself. He had watched her from the organ-loft, while the Signor played the voluntary, with feelings indescribable; and so did his mother, who was also in the Abbey, and who gaped at the fine young woman with a mixture of consternation and admiration, by no means sure of her inferiority, yet feeling that a crisis had arrived, and that whatever Miss Despard might have said before, she could not but be glad now of any offer of an 'ome. Mrs. Purcell did not stay for the voluntary, but went home quickly to see after "her dinner," very full of thought, and tremulous with expectation. The young lady was proud, she would not have anything to say to John before—but now, no doubt she would send for him and all would be settled. The housekeeper knew that a young stepmother was a strong argument against the peace of a girl who had been used to have everything her own way, and she felt with a tremor of her heart, half pride, half pain, that now at last she would have to resign her boy, and see him pass from beyond her ken into those regions of gentility with which the Signor's housekeeper had nothing to do. Very likely John, or John's wife who was "such a lady," would want her to leave her comfortable situation. Mrs. Purcell did not like the idea of it, but still, if it would help to make her boy happy—perhaps even it might remove a stumbling-block out of John's way if she were to take it into her own hands, and give up her situation. The thought made her heart heavy, for she liked her place, and the Signor, and her comfortable rooms, and the power of laying by a little money. But John was the first person to be considered. What could a young lady object to in his position? *he* was all that a gentleman could wish to be; but a mother who was in service might no doubt be an objection. Mrs. Purcell made up her mind hurriedly, that if it proved needful she would not wait to be asked, but would herself take the initiative and make the sacrifice; but she did so with a heavy heart. To give up not only her boy, who, when he was married, would not, she knew, be much more to his mother, but her occupation likewise, and her chief comforts, and her master who was, in a way, like another son to her, a foster-son, much greater and richer than she, but still dependent on her for his comfort—it was hard—but still she could do it for her John's sake. Meanwhile her John, feeling the Signor's hand heavy with meaning on his arm, answered with tremulous excitement, "Yes—— I saw it. It is terrible, terrible! a desecration. To think she should have to put up with *that* even for a day!"

"I wonder what will be the issue," said the Signor, meditatively. "Her heart is not in her work now. If she becomes an artist it will be against her will—Art is not what she is thinking of. I wonder what

will come of it. Will she feel the hollowness of this world and throw herself into her profession, or will she——"

"Master," said the young musician, fervently, "sooner or later she will turn to me. It is not possible that a man could love a young lady as I do, and have an 'ome to offer her, as I have——"

Purcell was educated—he did not forget his h's in general; but how many people are there who, beguiled by that familiar phrase, forget all precautions, and plunge recklessly into the pitfall of an 'ome!

"You think so?" said the Signor. He did not himself put any confidence in this result, and was even surprised, after his recent experience, that the young man should be sanguine; but still, after all, who ought to have such true intuitions as the hero himself? and there is no telling what perseverance mingled with enthusiasm may do. The Signor was not satisfied with his pupil. She would not devote herself to her work as he wished. She had no abstract devotion to art, as art. The Signor felt, musing over it, that it was possible she might take to it more warmly if by any chance she became Purcell's wife. John was a very good fellow, and when he was disappointed the Signor was very angry with Lottie; but still he thought it probable that Lottie, if she married him, would not find much to satisfy her in Purcell, and therefore would be driven to art. And of all results that could be attained, was not this the best? In the meantime, however, he was very doubtful whether by this means it ever would be attained.

"Yes, master," said the young man; "how can I help thinking so? I can give her, if not very much, at least independence and the comforts of an 'ome. She would not be dragged down by anything about me. My mother's position may be doubtful," he said, with passing embarrassment; "but you have been so good, you have never made her like a common servant; and at Sturminster nobody need ever know."

"Your mother has been very good and done a great deal for you; you must never let anyone ignore your mother."

"Certainly not," said the young man. "She *is* my mother; that ought to be enough for anybody. And I shall have her come to see me the same as if she were a duchess; but still there is no need of publishing to everybody what she is when she is at home."

"That is true, that is true," said the Signor; "then you really think there is a chance that this is how it will end?"

"Master," said Purcell, pausing at the door before they entered. It was one of the Italian traditions which had lingered in the Signor's habitual bearing, to stand still now and then as he was walking, by way of giving emphasis to a sentence. They paused now, looking at each other before they went in, and the colour came to the young fellow's face. "Master," he said, "it may look self-sufficient—but how can it end otherwise? There is no one else who will offer her what I can offer her; and it would be like saying she had no sense, which is very far from the case, to think she would stand out for ever. She is a lady, she

is above me in birth; but, thanks to you, I know how to behave like a gentleman; and surely sooner or later this is how it must end."

"Amen, with all my heart," said the Signor, turning in at the door, which old Pick held open behind, waiting, as one who knew his master's way.

It was Mr. Ashford who had intoned the service that afternoon, and his attention had been so caught by Polly's entrance, that he had made a kind of stumble in the beginning—a pause which was perceptible. After that, during the singing of the anthem and at other moments when his attention was free, he had looked down upon that gorgeous apparition from his high desk with a look of compassion on his face. The compassion, it is needless to say, was not for Polly, who wanted none of it. He watched her behind his book, or behind the hand which supported his head, with the most curious alarmed attention. And when he passed her with her husband going out, Mr. Ashford looked at her in a way which Polly thought to be flattering. "That's one as takes an interest in us," she said. "It's Ashford, the minor canon. It must be you he takes an interest in," whispered the Captain, and Polly laughed and tossed her head. Mr. Ashford went home with the same strange look on his face, softened and touched and pitiful. "Poor thing," he said to himself, "poor girl!" and when he got in he sat for a long time in the centre window in the dark, looking out, and trying to think out some way of help. What could he do for her? Poor thing! with all her better instincts and higher feelings, with her impulse of taking care of everybody and keeping her father and brother right, what would become of her now? Mr. Ashford asked himself with many an anxious thought, what could be done? A man could do nothing—where it was a girl that was in the case, a man was more helpless than a baby. He could do nothing to help her; he could not even show his sympathy, without probably doing more harm than good to the sufferer. He sat in the window-seat, gazing out on the dusk, and the dim horizon, as if they could help him in his musings. If he had only had a mother or sister—any woman to whom he could have appealed, he thought he must have done so on behalf of this girl. But he had neither sister nor mother. He was a man very much alone in the world. He had a brother, a poor clergyman with a large family, and a wife, who would not understand in the least why Ernest should interest himself in a stranger—*a girl*. If he wanted some one to spend his money upon, why not take one of the children? he thought he heard her say; and certainly she would not understand, much less respond to any appeal he could make to *her*. What could he do? If any other suggestion swept across Mr. Ashford's face in the dark or through his heart, nobody was there to see or divine it. He sat thus without ringing for his lamp till it was quite late, and was much discomposed to be found sitting in the dark when a messenger arrived with a note from the Deanery about the extra service for the next saint's day. He was annoyed to be found so, being

conscious perhaps of reasons for the vigil which he would not have cared to enter upon: for he was shy and sensitive: and it had often happened to him to be laughed at, because of his undue anxiety about others What is it to you? had been often said to him, and never with more occasion than now. For, after all, what did it matter to the minor canon, what became of Lottie Despard? Whether she and her step-mother should "get on" together, or if they should never "get on," but yet might manage to live under the same roof, a cat-and-doggish life—what was it to him? One way or other it would not take sixpence out of his pocket, or affect his comfort in any way. But yet he could not get it out of his head. No one in the house had thought of coming to his room to light his lamp, to see that all was in order for him. He was not served with precision as was the Signor, for he was fond of saving his servants trouble, and making excuses for them. And when the man came from the Deanery and followed the maid into the study, where she went groping, declaring that her master was not at home, the minor canon was uncomfortable, finding himself thus taken by surprise. "You need not wait for an answer. I will send one in the morning," he said, when the candles on the writing-table had been lit with a match, and he had read the note. He felt that his confused and troubled thoughts might be read in his eyes. But nobody had any clue to the subject of these thinkings; and how could any one suspect that it was a matter of such absolute indifference to himself that was occupying his thoughts—a thing with which he had nothing in the world to do?

CHAPTER XXXII.

What Rollo had to Marry on.

The moment after a man has made a proposal of marriage, and has been accepted, is not always a moment of unmitigated blessedness. There are ups and downs in the whole business from beginning to end. Sometimes the man has the best of it, and sometimes the woman. When either side has betrayed itself without a response on the other, when the man seems to waver in his privilege of choice, when the woman hesitates in her crowning prerogative of acceptance or rejection, then there are intervals on either side which are not enviable; but when all these preliminaries are over, and the explanation has been made, and the two understand each other—then the lady's position is, for the first few days at least, the most agreeable. She has no parents to interview, no pecuniary investigations to submit to, nor has she to enter upon the question of ways and means, settlements and income for the future. But when a man who knows he has nothing to marry upon is beguiled by circumstances, by a sudden emergency, or by strain of feeling, into the momentous offer, and after the first enthusiasm of acceptance looks himself in the face as it were, and asks himself how it is to be done, there is

something terrible in the hours that follow. How was it to be done? Rollo Ridsdale left Lottie at her door, and went across the road towards the Deanery in a state of mind which was indescribable. He was not an immaculate man, nor had he now spoken of love for the first time; but yet he was real in his love, and the response had been sweet to him, sweet and terrible, as conveying every risk and danger that life could bring, as well as every delight. He had lingered with his love until the last available moment, and yet it was a relief to turn his back upon her, to go away into the chaos of his own life and try to find a way out of this maze in which he had involved himself. How was he to marry? what was he to do? He felt giddy as he walked along, steadily enough to outward seeming, but in his soul groping like a blind man. He had asked Lottie Despard to marry him, and she had consented. He wanted nothing better than her companionship, her love, the delight and comfort of her to be his own; but, good heavens!—but, by Jove!—but, in the name of everything worth swearing by—how was it to be done?—how was he to marry? what was he to do? The happiness was delicious—it was a taste of Paradise, a whiff of Elysium—but——. Rollo did not know where he was going as he crossed the Dean's Walk. He went—steadily enough, his legs carrying him, his knowledge of the place guiding him mechanically, but his whole soul in a maze of thought. How was he to do it? How could he, a man with nothing, not much better than an adventurer, living upon chances and windfalls—how could he weight himself with the support of another—marry a wife? It was preposterous, it was terrible—yet it was sweet. Poor child, she was in want of his arm to shelter her, in want of some one to take care of her; and he could not tolerate the idea that anyone but himself should give her the succour she needed; but how was he to do it? The question seemed to get into the air, and whisper round him—how was he to do it? He had nothing, or what to such a man was nothing, and worse than nothing. He managed to live no one could tell how. True, in living he did not know how, Rollo managed to spend a good deal of money—more than many a family is reared upon: but there is proportion in everything, and he never could tell, from one year's end to another, how he had got through. And he had asked a girl to marry him! He groaned within himself when he came back to this centre thought, this pivot of all his reflections, though it was sweet. He had asked her to marry him; he had pledged himself to take her away out of her troubles, to throw open a refuge to her, to make her escape practicable: speedily, certainly, easily so far as she knew; —and how was he to do it? If the question went through his mind once, it flew and circled in wavering rounds about him, like a moth or a bat in summer, a hundred times at least as he went from the Chevalier's lodge to the Deanery door. He had no time for thinking, since the hour of dinner approached, and the Dean waited for no one; but he thought and thought all the same. What was he to do? He, marry! how was he to do it? Yet it must be done. He did nothing but ask

himself this while he brushed his hair and tied his evening tie. He had nothing, not a penny—he had a valet and a dressing-case, with gold tops to all the bottles, and the most expensive clothes from the dearest tailor—but he had nothing, and everybody knew that he had nothing. The situation was appalling. A cold dew came out on his forehead; he to do such a thing! but yet he had done it—he had committed himself—and now the question that remained was—not how to get out of it, which under any other circumstances would have been his clear duty, but how to do it? This was the problem he tried to solve while he was dressing, which flitted about his head while he sat at dinner, between every mouthful of his soup, and fluttered all through the dessert. How was he to do it? And when the evening was over—when Lady Caroline had gone to bed, and the Dean to his study, Rollo at length ventured out into the Deanery garden with his cigar, in spite of the black looks of Mr. Jeremie, who wanted to shut up the house and get to bed himself at a reasonable hour, as a dean's butler has a right to do.

It was cold—but he did not feel the cold—and the wind was still strong, blowing the black branches wildly about the leaden sky. The Dean's garden was bounded by the Slopes, only a low and massive grey wall, as old as the buttresses amid which the lawn was set, separating it from the larger grounds, which were open to the community—and Rollo leaning on that wall could almost see the spot where he had sat with Lottie, when she had clasped her hands on his arm, leaning upon him with delicious trust, and giving up all her future into his hands. Even then what a difference there had been between them!—she throwing herself upon him in utter faith and confidence, feeling herself delivered completely and at once from all the troubles that overwhelmed her; while he, even in the thrill of pleasure which that soft weight and pressure gave him, felt his heart jump with such sudden alarm as words could not describe. Now when he thought it over, the alarm was more than the pleasure. Lottie, retired into her little chamber, was at that hour going over the whole scene with the tenderest happiness and reliance—feeling safe with him, feeling free of all responsibility, not even forecasting the future, safe and relieved from all the anxieties of the past, caring for nothing but this moment, this exquisite climax of life, this perfect union that had begun and was never to end. Very, very different were Rollo's thoughts. How was he to do it? Marry! the very idea seemed impossible. It involved disclosure, and disclosure would be madness. What would his relations say to him?—what would his friends say to him? His tradesmen would send in their bills, his associates would contemplate him with the very horror of astonishment. Ridsdale married! as well cut his throat at once. Had he ever thought of the little *ménage* on which Lottie's thoughts (had they been free to plan anything) would have dwelt with simple pride and happiness, he would have been disposed really to cut his throat. In such a case Lottie would have been sure of her own powers—sure that if they were poor she could make their money

go twice as far as Rollo by himself could make it go—and could much more than balance her share of the expenses by the housewifely powers which it would have been her delight and her ambition to exercise. But to Rollo love in a cottage was a simple folly, meaning nothing. The very idea was so foreign to him that it never entered into his mind at all. What did enter into his mind as the only hope in the blank of the future, was of a very different description. It was the original idea which had first of all moved him towards this girl, who gradually had awakened within him so many other sentiments: her voice. Should he be able to produce this as he hoped, then there would be a way of escape from the difficulty. The Manager had behaved like a fool, but Rollo had not changed his opinion. Though he had fallen in love with the singer, and his sentiments in regard to her had thus been modified, he had never changed his opinion. She possessed a magnificent organ, and though (which seemed to him very strange) Handel at present was her only inspiration, yet he felt that with proper care that voice could do anything, and that in it might yet lie all the elements of fortune. Casting about around all his horizon, for something like salvation, this was the only light that Rollo perceived. It, perhaps, was not the most desirable of lights. To marry a singer in full heyday of her powers, admired by all the world, and making a great deal of money, was not a thing that any younger son would hesitate to do; but an unknown singer with all her way to make, and her very education still so imperfect, that was a very different matter; but still it was the only chance. In former times, perhaps, a man would have thought it necessary to pretend at least a desire to snatch his bride from the exposure of publicity, from the stage or even from the concert-room—a determination to work for her rather than to let her work for him; but along with circumstances sentiments change, and the desire of women for work is apt to be supported from an undesirable side by those who once would have thought their honour concerned in making women's work unnecessary. In civilisation there can be no advance without its attendant drawback. Mr. Ridsdale had fallen in love, a thing no young man can entirely guard against, and he had engaged to marry Lottie Despard, partly because he was in love with her, partly because she was in want of protection and succour. But he did not know in what way he could keep a wife—and short of breaking his word and abandoning her altogether (things which at this moment it seemed utterly impossible to do), what other way was open to him than to consider how his wife could keep him? This was a great deal more easy. He had nothing—no money, no profession—but she had a profession, a something which was worth a great deal of money, which only required cultivation to be as good as a fortune. Rollo's heart perceptibly lightened as he thought of this. It did not make the social difficulties much easier, or soften the troubles which he must inevitably have with his family; but still, whereas the other matter had been impossible, this brought it within the range of things that

could be contemplated. He could not refrain from one sigh (in the undercurrent of his mind—not dwelt upon or even acknowledged, a thing which he would have been ashamed of had he admitted it to himself)—one sigh that the idea of marriage had come in at all. She might have found in him all the succour, all the companionship, all the support she wanted without *that*; and it would have done her no harm in her after career. But that was a secret thought—an inadvertence, a thing which he dared not permit himself to think, as it were, in the daylight, in his own full knowledge. He knew very well what a fool he would appear to everybody—how the idea that he, Rollo, with all his experience, should be thus taken in at last, would cause infinite surprise and laughter among his friends—but still there came a gleam of possibility into the matter when he thought of Lottie's gift. By that means they might do it. It was not quite out of the question, quite impossible. Rollo had been so lost in thought that he had not seen Mr. Jeremie looking out from the window through which he had gone into the garden; but as he arrived at this, which was a kind of conclusion, if not a very satisfactory one, he became at last aware of the respectable butler's anxiety.

"Her ladyship, sir, don't hold with leaving the windows open," said Mr. Jeremie, who did not hold with staying out of bed to attend upon a young man's vagaries. There had been nothing of this kind in Miss Augusta's time—not even when Mr. Daventry came courting. Rollo tossed the end of his cigar over the wall and came in, somewhat relieved in his mind, though the relief was not very great. It left all the immediate question unsolved, what his family would say, and what was to be done in the meantime—but it gave a feeble light of possibility in the future. He had calculated on Lottie's voice to make his fortune when he thought of it only as a speculator. He had much more right to look upon her as likely to make his fortune now.

In the morning the same thought was the first in Rollo's mind; but the faint light of hope it gave was surrounded by clouds that were full of trouble. Supposing that in the course of time, when she was thoroughly established in her profession, trained and started, she could manage to attain that most necessary thing called an income, with which to meet the world—this was a contingency which still lay in the future; whereas it might be necessary to act at once. The very urgency and anxiety of Rollo's thoughts will show that he neither wanted to abandon Lottie, nor to allow her to guess that he was alarmed by his engagement to her. The whole scope and object of his deliberations was to make the thing possible. But for this why should he have troubled himself about it at all? He might have "let things take their course"—he might have gone on enjoying the delights of love-making, and all a lover's privileges, without going any further. Lottie was not the kind of girl who ever would have hurried matters, or insisted upon the engagement being kept. He knew well enough that she would never "pull him up." But he was

in love with Lottie—he wanted to deliver her from her troubles—he wanted to have her for his own—if he could only see how it was to be done. Evidently there were various conditions which must be insisted on—which Lottie must yield to. Public notice must not be called to the tie between them more than was absolutely necessary. Everything must be conducted carefully and privately—not to make any scandal—and not to compel the attention of his noble family. Rollo did not want to be sent for by his father, to be remonstrated with by his elder brother, to have all his relatives preaching sermons to him. Even his aunt Caroline, passive, easy-going soul—even she would be roused, he felt, to violence, could she divine what was in the air. Marry Miss Despard! the idea would drive her out of all the senses she possessed. Kind as she was, and calm as she was, Rollo felt that in such circumstances she would no longer be either kind or calm—and if even Lady Caroline were driven to bay, what would be the effect of such a step on Lord Courtland, who had no calm of nature with which to meet the revelation? Therefore his heart was heavy as he went out, as soon as the bells had ceased ringing for matins, to meet his love on the Slopes. His heart was heavy, yet he was not a cool or indifferent lover. The thought of seeing her again was sweet to him; but the cares were many, and he did not know how to put into language which would not vex or hurt her, the things that must be said. He tried to wrap them up in honeyed words, but he was not very successful—and at last he decided to leave it all to Providence—to take no thought for what he was to say. The words will be put into my mouth at the right time, he said to himself, piously. He could not exactly forecast what shape the conversation might take, or how this special subject should be introduced. He would not settle what he had to say, but would leave it to fate.

The morning sunshine lay as usual unbroken upon the Dean's Walk. It had been feeble and fitful in the morning, as sunshine has often begun to be in October, but now had warmed into riper glory. The paths on the Slopes were strewed with fallen leaves, which the winds of last night had blown about in clouds. Rollo was first at the trysting-place, and when he saw Lottie appear suddenly round the bole of the big elm-tree, she seemed to be walking to him, her foot all light and noiseless, upon a path of gold. Her steps seemed to have a fairy tinkle upon that yellow pavement. The movement of her figure was like music, with a flowing liquid measure in it. The little veil that dropped over her hat, the ribbons at her neck, the soft sweep of her dark merino gown, commonest yet prettiest of fabrics, all united in one soft line. There was nobody by, and it was the first heavenly morning upon which they had belonged to each other. She came to him as if out of paradise, out of heaven, all radiant with happiness and celestial trust and love. A glow of tenderness and gladness came over the young man. He forgot all about the difficulties, about money, about his family, about how they were to live and what was to be done. He went to meet her, ardent

and eager, forgetting everything but herself. It was the *vita nuova* all over again, a new earth and new skies. It seemed to both of them that they had never lived before, that this was the birthday of a glorified existence. Even last night, in the agitation of their happiness, had not been like this first new day. When they stepped into each other's sight, realising the mutual property, the mutual right, the incomprehensible sweetness of belonging to each other, everything else seemed to be swept out of the world. There was nothing visible but themselves, the sweet sky, and genial air: the leaves dropping softly, all crimson and golden, the sun shining on them with a sympathetic surprise of pleasure. For the moment, even to the young man of the world, everything was simple, primitive, and true, all complication and conventionalities swept away; and if so to Rollo, how much more to Lottie, thus advancing sweetly, with a soft measure in her step, not hurried or eager, but in modest faith and innocence, into her lover's arms.

And lo! in a moment all his calculations proved needless. Instead of talking seriously to each other, making their mutual arrangements, deciding what was to be done, as would have been far the wisest way of employing the solitude of this sweet morning, which seemed to brighten expressly for them—what did the two do, but fall into an aimless delicious whispering about their two happy selves, and nothing more! They had things to say to each other which came by stress of nature, and had to be said, yet were nothing—while the things of real importance were thrust aside. They fell a-gossiping about themselves, about each other, going over all the old ground, repeating the last evening's tender follies, about—when you first began to think—and when I first knew—and what had been in the one heart and in the other, when both had to talk of other things, and make no sign. What need to follow all the course of that foolishness? There was nothing in earth or heaven so deeply interesting to Lottie as to hear how Rollo was thinking of her while he stood and talked to somebody else, watching her from far; and how his heart would beat when he saw her coming, and how he blasphemed old Captain Temple, yet blessed him next moment for bringing her here; and what he had really meant when he said this and that, which had perplexed her at the time; nor to Rollo than to know how she had watched for him, and looked for his sympathy, and felt herself backed up and supported the moment he appeared. There was not a day of the past month but had its secret history, which each longed to disclose to the other—and scarcely an hour, scarcely a scrap of conversation which did not contain a world of unrevealed meaning to be unfolded and interpreted. Talk of an hour! they had ample enough material for a century without being exhausted; and as for arrangements, as for the (so to speak) business of the matter, who thought of it? For Lottie was not an intelligent young woman, intending to be married, but a happy girl in love; and Rollo, though he knew better, was in love too, and wished for nothing better than these delightful confidences. The hours went by

like a moment. They had already been aroused two or three times by the roll of baby carriages propelled by nursemaids before the greater volume of music from the Abbey proclaimed that service was over. "Already!" they both cried, with wonder and dismay; and then, for the first time, there was a pause.

"I had so much to talk to you about," he said, "and we have not had time to say a word, have we? Ah! when can we have a good long time to ourselves? Can you escape your Captain to-night, my darling? I should like to shake him by the hand, to thank him for taking care of you; but couldn't you escape from him, my Lottie, to-night?"

Lottie grew a little pale; her heart sank, not with distrust, but with perhaps a little, a very little disappointment. Was this still how it was to be? Just the same anxious diplomacies to secure a meeting, the same risks and chances? This gave her a momentary chill. "It is very difficult," she said. "He is the only one I have to take care of me. He would think it unkind."

"You must not say now the only one, my Lottie—not the only one—my substitute for a little while, who will soon have to give me up his place."

"But he will not like to give it up now; not till he knows; perhaps not even then—for his daughter, you know——"

"Ah! it was she who married Dropmore. Lottie, my love, my darling, I cannot live through the evening without you. Could you not come again, at the same time as last night? It is early dark, heaven be praised. Take your walk with him, and then give him the slip, and come here, sweet, here to me. I shall be watching, counting the moments. It is bad enough to be obliged to get through the day without you. Ah! it is the Signor's day. The Signor is all rapt up in his music. He will never suspect anything. I shall be able to see you at least, to hear you, to look at you, my lovely darling——"

After a moment, said Lottie, "That was one thing I wanted to ask you about. You know why the Signor gives me lessons. Will it be right *now* to go on with him? *now* that everything is changed? Should not I give them up?"

"Give them up!" cried Rollo, with a look of dismay. "My darling, what are you thinking of? They are more necessary, more important than ever. Of course, we will pay for them after. Oh, no fear but he will be repaid; but no, no, my love, my sweet, you must not give them up!"

She looked at him with something like anxiety in her eyes, not knowing what he could mean. What was it? Lottie could not but feel a little disappointed. It seemed that everything was to go on just the same as before.

"I shall see you there," he said; "so long as we are in the same place everything is sweet; and I have always taken so much interest in your dear voice that no one can suspect. And to-night you will come—promise me, my darling—just after the service, when it is getting dark?"

"Yes," she whispered, with a sigh—then started from his side. "I

saw some one among the trees. The old Chevaliers are coming up for their morning walk. Let me go now—you must let me go—Mr. Ridsdale——"

"Mr. Ridsdale! How can I let my Lottie go before she has called me by my right name?"

"Oh, I must not stay. I see people coming," said Lottie, disappointed, troubled, afraid of being seen, yet angry with herself for being afraid. "Mr. Ridsdale—Rollo, dear Rollo—let me go now——"

"Till it is time for the Signor——" And he did let her go, with a hasty withdrawal on his own part, for unmistakably there were people to be seen moving about among the trees, not indeed coming near their corner, yet within sight of them. Lottie left him hurriedly, not looking back. She was ashamed, though she had no cause for shame. She ran down the bank to the little path which led to the foot of the hill, and to the town. She could not go up and run the risk of being seen going home by the Dean's Walk. She drew her veil over her face, and her cheeks burned with blushes: she was ashamed, though she had done no wrong. And Rollo stood looking down after her, watching her with a still more acute pang. There were things which were very painful to him, which did not affect her. That a girl like Lottie should go away alone, unattended, and walk through the street, with no one with her, a long round, annoyed him beyond measure. He ought to have gone with her, or some one ought to be with her. But then what could he do? He might as well give up the whole matter at once as betray all he was meditating to his people in this way. But he watched her, leaning over the low parapet, with trouble and shame. The girl whom he loved ought not to go about unattended, and this relic of chivalry, fallen into conventionality, moved him more than greater things. He did not object, like Ferdinand, to let his Miranda carry his load for him; but it did trouble him that she should walk through St. Michael's by herself, though in the sweet security of the honest morning. Thus minds differ all over the world.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Lottie's Side of the Question.

Lottie made her way down the slopes alone, with feelings which had greatly changed from those of a few minutes ago. How happy she had been! The hour that had passed under the falling leaves had been like paradise; but the portals of exit from paradise are perhaps never so sweet as those of entrance. Her coming away was with a sense of humiliation and shame. As she wound her way down her favourite by-road winding among the shrubs and trees, she could not help feeling that she was making her escape, as if from some guilty meeting, some clandestine rendezvous. In all her life Lottie had never known this sensa-

tion before. She had been shy, and had shrunk from the gaze of people who had stared at her, in admiration of her beauty or of her singing, but in her shyness there had always been the pride of innocence; and never before had she been afraid to meet any eye, or felt it necessary to steal away, to keep out of sight as if she were guilty. She had not done anything wrong, but yet she had all the feeling of having done something wrong—the desire to escape, the horror of detection. To some the secret meeting, the romance and mystery, would have been only an additional happiness, but Lottie, proud and frank and open-hearted, could not bear the very thought of doing anything of which she was ashamed. The sensation hurt and humiliated her. All had been very different *before*: to meet her lover unawares, yet not without intention, with a delightful element of chance in each encounter—to look out secretly for him, yet wonder innocently to find him—to let her steps be drawn here or there by a sense of his presence, with a fond pretence of avoiding him, a sweet certainty of meeting him—all these risks and hazards of emotion had been natural. But Lottie felt with a sudden jar of her nerves and mind that this ought not to continue so. She had felt a little wondering disappointment on the previous night when he had asked her to meet him again, without any suggestion that he should go to her, or make the new bond between them known. Even then there had been a faint jar, a sigh of unfulfilled expectation. But now their hurried parting, her own flight, the little panic lest they should be seen, and discovery follow, made Lottie's heart sick. How well she could imagine how this ought to have been! They ought not to have fled from each other or been afraid of any man's eye. It ought not to have mattered whether the Signor or any one suspected. Blushing and shy, yet with full faith in the sympathy of all who saw her, Lottie should have walked down the Dean's Walk with her betrothed: she should have avoided no one. She should have been shame-faced but not ashamed. What a difference between the two! all the difference that there is between the soft blush of happiness and the miserable burning of guilt. And this was what ought to have been. Half the misery of Lottie—as half the misery of all imaginative inexperienced women—arose from the pain and disappointment of feeling that those she loved did not come up to the ideal standard she had set up in her soul. She was disappointed, not so much because of the false position in which she herself was placed (for this, except instinctively, she had but little realised), but because Rollo was not doing, not yet, all that it seemed right for him to do. She would have forced and beaten (had she been able) Law into the fulfilment of his duty, she would even have made him generous to herself, not for the sake of herself, but that he should be a model of brotherhood, an example of all a true man ought to be; and if this was so in the case of her brother, how much more with her lover? If to be harsh as a tyrant or indifferent as a sultan, was the highest ideal of a man's conduct, how much happier many a poor creature would be! It seems a paradox to say so, but it is

true enough; for the worst of all, in a woman's mind, is to feel that the wrong done to *her* is worse wrong to *him*, an infringement of the glory of the being whom she would fain see perfect. This, however, is a mystery beyond the comprehension of the crowd. Lottie was used to being disappointed with Law—was she fated to another disappointment more cruel and bitter? She did not ask herself the question, she would not have thought it even, much less said it for all the world; but secretly there was a wonder, a pang, a faintness of failure in her heart.

It is not without an effort, however, that the heart will permanently admit any such disappointment. As Lottie went her way thus drooping, ashamed and discouraged, thinking of everything that had been done and that ought to have been done, there drifted vaguely across her mind a kind of picture of Rollo's meeting with her father, and what it would be. She had no sooner thought of this than a glow of alarm came over her face, bringing insensibly consolation to her mind. Rollo and her father! What would the Captain say to him? He would put on his grand air, in which even Lottie had no faith; he would exhibit himself in all his vain greatness, in all his self-importance, jaunty and fine, to his future son-in-law. He would give Lottie herself a word of commendation in passing, and he would spread himself forth before the stranger as if it was he whom Rollo wanted and cared for. Lottie's steps quickened out of the languid pace into which they had fallen, and her very forehead grew crimson as she realised that meeting. Thank heaven, it had not taken place yet! Rollo had been too wise, too kind, too delicate to humble his love by hurrying into the presence of the Captain, into the house where the Captain's new wife now reigned supreme. The new wife—she too would have a share in it, she would be called into counsel, she would give her advice in everything, and claim a right to interfere. Oh, Lottie thought, how foolish she had been! how much wiser was Rollo, no doubt casting about in his mind how it was best to be done, and pondering over it carefully to spare her pain. She felt herself enveloped in one blush from the crown of her head to the sole of her feet; but how sweet was that shame! It was she who was foolish, not he who had failed. Her cheeks burned with a penitential flush, but he was faultless. There was nothing in him to disappoint, but only the most delicate kindness, the tenderest care of her. How could she have thought otherwise? It was not possible that Rollo should like secret meetings, should fear discovery. In the first days of their acquaintance he had shown no reluctance to come to the humble little lodge. But now—his finer feeling shrank from it now—he wanted to take his love away from that desecrated place, not to shame her by prying into its ignoble mysteries. He was wiser, better, kinder than anyone. And she was ashamed of *herself*, not any longer of anything else, ashamed of her poor, mean, unworthy interpretation of him; and as happy in her new, changed consciousness of guilt, and penitence and self-disgust—as happy as if, after her downfall into earth, she had now safely got back into heaven.

By this time she had got out of the wooded Slopes, and over the stile, and into the steep thoroughfare at the foot of the Abbey walls, the pavement of St. Michael's Hill. Lottie did not feel that there was any harm in walking through the street alone, as Rollo thought there was. She wanted no attendant. A little bodyguard, invisible, but with a radiance going out from them which shone about her, attended upon her way—love and innocence and happiness, no longer with drooping heads but brave and sweet, a band invisible, guaranteeing their charge against all ills. As she went along the street with this shining retinue, there was nothing in all the world that could have harmed her; and nobody wanted to harm the girl—of whom, but that she was proud, no soul in St. Michael's had an unkind word to say. Everybody knew the domestic trouble that had come upon her, and all the town was sorry for Lottie—all the more that there was perhaps a human satisfaction in being sorry for one whose fault was that she was proud. She met Captain Temple as she entered the Abbey Gate. Many thoughts about her had been in the kind old man's heart all the morning, and it was partly to look for her, after vain walks about the Abbey Precincts, that he was turning his steps towards the town. He came up to her eagerly, taking her hand between his. He thought she must have been wandering out disconsolate, no matter where, to get away from the house which was no longer a fit home for one like her. He was so disturbed and anxious about her, that the shadow which was in his mind seemed to darken over Lottie, and cast a reflection of gloom upon her face. "You have been out early, my dear? Why did you not send for me to go with you? After matins I am always at your service," he said.

But there was none of the gloom which Captain Temple imagined in Lottie's face. She looked up at him out of the soft mist of her own musings with a smile. "I went out before matins," she said; "I have been out a long time. I had—something to do."

"My poor child! I fear you have been wandering, keeping out of the way," said the old Captain. Then another thought seized him. Had she begun already to serve the new wife and do her errands? "My dear," he said, "what have you been doing? you must not be too good—you must not forget yourself too much. Your duty to your father is one thing, but you must not let yourself be made use of now—you must recollect your own position, my dear."

"My position?" she looked up at him bewildered; for she was thinking only of Rollo, while he thought only of her father's wife.

"Yes, Lottie, my dear child, you have thought only of your duty hitherto, but you must not yield to every encroachment. You must not allow it to be supposed that you give up everything."

"Ah," said Lottie, lifting to him eyes which seemed to swim in a haze of light; "to give up everything would be so—— I don't know what you mean," she added hastily, in a half terrified tone. As for Captain Temple, he was quite bewildered, and did not know what to think.

"Need I explain, my dear, what I mean? There can be but one thing that all your friends are thinking of. This new relation, this new connection. I could not sleep all night for thinking of you, in the house with that woman. My poor child! and my wife too. You were the last thing we talked of at night, the first in the morning——"

"Ah," said Lottie again, coming back to reality with a long-drawn breath. "I was not thinking of her; but I understand you now."

Lottie had, however, some difficulty in thinking of *her*, even now; for one moment, being thus recalled to the idea, her countenance changed; but soon came back to its original expression. Her eyes were dewy and sweet—a suspicion of tears in them like the morning dew on flowers with the sunshine reflected in it, the long eyelashes moist, but the blue beneath as clear as a summer sky; and the corners of her mouth would run into curves of smiling unawares; her face was not the face of one upon whom the cares of the world were lying heavy, but of one to whom some new happiness had come. She was not thinking of what he was saying, but of something in her own mind. The kind old Captain could not tell what to think; he was alarmed, though he did not know why.

"Then it is not so bad," he said, "as you feared?"

"What is not so bad? Things at home? Oh, Captain Temple! But I try not to think about it," Lottie said hastily, with a quiver in her lip. She looked at him wistfully, with a sudden longing. "I wish —I wish—but it is better not to say anything."

"You may trust to me, my dear; whatever is in your heart I will never betray you; you may trust to me."

Lottie's eyes filled with tears as she looked at him, but she shook her head. They were not bitter tears, only a little bitter-sweet of happiness that wanted expression, but which she dared not reveal. If she could but have told him! If Rollo, failing her father, would but come and speak to this kind and true friend! But she shook her head. She was no longer free to say and do whatever pleased her out of her own heart. She must think of *him*; and while he did not speak, what could she say? She put out her hand to her old friend again with a little sudden artifice unlike Lottie. "I have been out all the morning," she said; "I must make haste and get back now."

"I am very glad you are not unhappy," said the old Captain, looking at her regretfully. He was not quite sincere. To tell the truth it gave him a shock to find that Lottie was not unhappy; how could she put up with such a companion, with such a fate? He went in to his wife, who had been watching furtively at the window while this conversation was going on, to talk it all over. Mrs. Temple was almost glad to find something below perfection in the girl about whom secretly she thought as much as her husband talked. "We have been thinking too much about it," she said; "if she can find the stepmother congenial, it will be better for her."

"Congenial! you are talking folly. How could she be congenial?"

cried Captain Temple, with great heat, but he did not know what to make of it. He was disappointed in Lottie. When he had met her the day before she had been quivering with pain and shame, revolted and outraged, as it was right and natural she should be: but now it seemed to have passed altogether from her mind. He could not make it out. He was disappointed; he went on talking of this wonder all day long and shaking his white head.

As for Lottie, when she went home, she passed through the house, light and silent as a ghost, to her own little room, where, abstracted from everything else, she could live in the new little world of her own which had come out of the mists into such sudden and beautiful life. It was very unlike Lottie, but what more does the young soul want when the *vita nuova* has just begun, but such a possibility of self-abstraction and freedom to pursue its dreams? Rapt in these, she gave up her occupation, her charge, without a sigh. When she was called to table she came quite gently, and took no notice of anything that passed there, having enough in her own mind to keep her busy. Law was as much astonished as Captain Temple. He had thought that Lottie would not endure it for a day; but, thanks to that happy pre-occupation, Lottie sailed serenely through these troubled waters for more than a week, during which she spent a considerable portion of her time on the Slopes, though the weather grew colder and colder every day, and the rest in her own room, in which she sat fireless, doing her accustomed needlework, her darnings and mendings, mechanically, while Polly remodelled the drawing-room, covering it up with crocheted antimacassars, and all the cheap and coarse devices of vulgar upholstery. While this was going on, she too was content to have Lottie out of the way. Polly pervaded the house with high-pitched voice and noisy step; and she filled it with savoury odours, giving the two men hot suppers, instead of poor Lottie's cold beef, which they had often found monotonous. The Captain now came in for this meal, which in former times he had rarely favoured; he spent the evenings chiefly at home, having not yet dropped out of the fervour of the honeymoon; and on the whole even Law was not sure that there was not something to be said for the new administration of the house. There was no cold beef—that was an improvement patent to the meanest capacity. As for Polly, nothing had yet occurred to mar her glory and happiness. She wore her blue silk every day, she walked gloriously about the streets in her orange-blossoms, pointed out by everybody as one of the ladies of the Abbey. She went to the afternoon service and sat in her privileged seat, and looked down with dignified sweetness upon "the girls" who were as she once was. She felt herself as a goddess, sitting there in the elevated place to which she had a right, and it seemed to her that to be a Chevalier's wife was as grand as to be a princess. But Polly did not soil her lips with so vulgar a word as wife. She called herself a Chevalier's lady, and her opinion of her class was great. "Chevalier means the same thing as knight, and, instead of being simple missis, I am sure we should

all be My lady," Polly said, "if we had our rights." Even her husband laughed, but this did not change her opinion. It was ungrateful of the other Chevaliers' ladies that they took no notice of this new champion of their order. But for the moment Polly, in the elation of her success, did not mind this, and was content to wait for the recognition which sooner or later she felt would be sure to come.

This elation kept her from interfering with Lottie, whose self-absorbed life in her own room, and her exits and entrances, Mrs. Despard tolerated and seemed to accept as natural; she had so many things to occupy and to please her, that she could afford to let her step-daughter alone. And thus Lottie pursued for a little time that life out of nature to which she had been driven. She lived in those moments on the Slopes, and in the hours she spent at the Signor's piano, singing; and then brooded over these intervals of life in the silence. Her lessons had increased to three in the week, and these hours of so-called study were each like a drama of intense and curious interest. Rollo was always there—a fact which he explained to the Signor by his professional interest in the new singer, and which to Lottie required no explanation; and there too was her humble lover, young Purcell, who as she grew familiar with the sight of him, and showed no displeasure at his appearance, grew daily a little more courageous, sometimes daring to turn the leaves of the music, and even to speak to her. Mrs. O'Shaughnessy, who sat by, watching them all with lively but not extravagant interest, was the only one in the little party who was not more or less excited. As for Lottie, this lesson was the centre of all her life. If music be the food of love, love was the very inspiration of music to her; the two re-acted upon each other, raising her to such a height of primitive heroic passion as nobody near her divined—as nobody, indeed, except perhaps the Signor, with his Italian susceptibility, was capable of divining. He saw indeed with dissatisfaction, with an interest which was almost angry, that it was not art that moved her, and that the secret of the astonishing progress she made, was not in his instructions. What was it? The Signor was angry, for he felt no certainty that this wonderful progress was real. Something made her sing like an angel. What was it? not art. The natural qualities of her voice were not to be gainsayed; but the musician felt that the training under which she seemed to be advancing visibly, was all fictitious, and that it was something else that inspired her. But Rollo had no such enlightenment. He remarked with all the technicality of an amateur how her high notes gained in clearness, and her low notes in melody, at every new effort. It was wonderful; but then the Signor was a wonderful teacher, a wonderful accompanyist, and what so natural as that a creature of genius like this, should grow under his teaching like a flower? Though it was to him she sang, and though her love for him was her inspiration, Rollo was as unaware of this as old Pickering in the hall, who listened and shook his head, and decided in his heart that a woman with a voice like that was a deal too grand for Mr. John. "She's more

like Jenny Lind than anything," old Pick said; and in this Mr. Ridsdale agreed, as he sat and listened, and thought over the means which should be employed to secure her success. As for young Purcell, he stood entranced and turned over the leaves of the music. Should he ever dare to speak to her again, to offer her his love, as he had once ventured to do, —she who seemed born to enthral the whole world? But then, the young fellow thought, who was there but he who had an 'ome to offer Lottie? He was the nobler of the two between whom she stood, the two men who loved her: all his thought was, that she being unhappy, poor, her father's house made wretched to her, he had an 'ome to offer her; whereas Rollo thought of nothing but of the success she must achieve in which he would have his share. In order to achieve that success Rollo had no mind to lend her even his name; but the idea that it was a thing certain, comforted him much in the consciousness of his own imprudent engagement, and gave a kind of sanction to his love. To marry a woman with such a faculty for earning money could not be called entirely imprudent. These were the calculations, generous and the reverse, which were made about her. Only Lottie herself made no calculations, but sang out of the fulness of her heart, and the delicate passion that possessed her; and the Signor stood and watched, dissatisfied, sympathetic, the only one that understood at all, though he but poorly, the high emotion and spring-tide of life which produced that flood of song.

In this highly-strained unnatural way, life went on amid this little group of people, few of whom were conscious of any volcano under their feet. It went on day by day, and they neither perceived the gathering rapidity of movement in the events, nor any other sign that to-day should not be as yesterday. Shortly after the explanation had taken place between Rollo and Lottie, Augusta Huntington, now Mrs. Daventry, arrived upon her first visit home. She was the Dean's only child, and naturally every honour was done to her. All the country round, every one that was of sufficient importance to meet the Dean's daughter, was invited to hail her return. The Dean himself took the matter in hand to see that no one was overlooked. They would all like, he thought, to see Augusta, the princess royal of the reigning house; and Augusta was graciously pleased to like it too. One of these entertainments ended in a great musical party, to which all who had known Miss Huntington, all the singers in the madrigals and choruses of which she had been so fond, were asked. When Lottie's invitation came, there was a great thrill and commotion in Captain Despard's house. Lottie did not even suspect the feeling which had been roused on the subject when she took out her white muslin dress, now, alas, no longer so fresh as at first, and inspected it anxiously. It would do still with judicious ironing, but what must she do for ornaments, now that roses were no longer to be had? This troubled Lottie's mind greatly, though it may be thought a frivolous question, until a few hours before the time, when two different presents came for her, of flowers: one being a large and elaborate bouquet, the

other a bunch of late roses, delicate, lovely, half opened buds, which could only have come out of some conservatory. One of these was from Rollo, and who could doubt which it was? Who but he would have remembered her sole decoration, and found for her in winter those ornaments of June? What did she care who sent the other? she decked herself with her roses, in a glow of grateful tenderness, as proud as she was happy, to find herself thus provided by his delicate care and forethought. It did not even occur to Lottie to notice the dark looks that were thrown at her as she came downstairs all white and shining, and was wrapped by Law (always ostentatiously attentive to his sister in Polly's presence) in the borrowed glory of Mrs. O'Shaughnessy's great Indian shawl.

The party was large and crowded, and Lottie, all alone in it, was frightened and confused at first; but they were all very kind to her, she thought. Lady Caroline said, "How do you do, Miss Despard?" with something like a smile, and looked as if she might have given Lottie her hand, had not the girl been afraid; and Augusta, when she found her out, came forward with a welcome which was almost effusive. "I hear you have improved so much," she said, taking in at one glance all the particulars of Lottie's appearance, with a wondering question within herself where the roses came from, though she perceived at once that it was the same white muslin frock. And when Lottie sang, which the Signor managed she should do with great effect towards the close of the evening, Augusta rushed to her with great eyes of astonishment. "Where did you get all that voice," she cried; "you did not have that voice when I went away." "I flatter myself it was I that found Miss Despard out," said Rollo, suffering himself to look at her, which hitherto he had only done when there was a shield of crowding groups between him and his cousin. Before this he had managed to make the evening sweet to Lottie by many a whispered word: but when he looked at her now, unawares, under Augusta's very eyes, with that fond look of proprietorship which is so unmistakable by the experienced, and to which Lottie responded shyly by a smile and blush, and conscious tremor of happiness, neither of them knew what a fatal moment it was. Augusta, looking on, suddenly woke up to the meaning of it, the meaning of Rollo's long stay at the Deanery, and various other wonders. She gave the pair but one look, and then she turned away. But Lottie did not see that anything strange had happened. She was so happy that even when Rollo too left her, her heart was touched and consoled by the kindly looks of the people whom she knew in the crowd, the ladies who had heard her sing before at the Deanery, and who were gracious to her, and Mr. Ashford who kept by her side and watched over her—"like a father," Lottie said to herself, with affectionate gratitude, such as might have become that impossible relationship. The minor canon did not leave her for the rest of the evening, and he it was who saw her home, waiting till the door was opened, and pressing kindly her trembling cold hand: for, she

could not tell how, the end of the evening was depressing and discouraging, and the pleasure went all out of it when Rollo whispered to her in passing, "Take care, for heaven's sake, or Augusta will find us out!" Why should it matter so much to him that Augusta should find it out? Was not she more to him than Augusta? Lottie shrank within herself and trembled with a nervous chill. She was half grateful to, half angry with even Mr. Ashford. Why should he be so much more kind to her, so much more careful of her than the man who had promised her his love and perpetual care?

But even now when she stole in, shivering with the cold of disappointment and discouragement, through the dark house to her room Lottie did not know all that this evening had wrought. And she scarcely noticed the gloom on Polly's face, nor the strain of angry monologue which her father's wife gave vent to, next morning. Polly wondered what was the good of being a married lady, when a young unmarried girl that was nobody, was took such notice of, and her betters left at 'ome? Did people know no manners? gentlefolks! they called themselves gentlefolks, and behaved like that? If that was politeness, Polly thanked heaven it was not the kind as she had been taught. But the outburst came when Lottie, taking no notice, scarcely even hearing what was said, showed herself with her music in her hands going out to her lesson. Polly came out of her husband's room and planted herself defiantly in Lottie's way. "Where are you going again," she said, "Miss? where are you going again? is this to be always the way of it? Do you mean never to stay at home nor do anything to help nor make yourself agreeable? I declare it is enough to put a saint in a passion. But I won't put up with it, I can tell you. I did not come here to be treated like this, like the dirt under your feet."

Lottie was almost too much taken by surprise to speak. It was the first absolute shock of collision. "I am going for my lesson," she said.

"Your lesson," cried Polly. "Oh my patience, oh my poor 'usband! that is the way his money goes—lessons for you and lessons for Law, and I don't know what! You ought to be ashamed of yourselves, you two. You ought to be making your living both of you, if you were honest, instead of living on your father as wants all he's got for himself. But you shan't go to any lesson if I can help it," she cried. "You'll stay at home and try and be of a little use, or you'll march off this very day, and find some one else to put up with you and your lessons. It shan't be me. I won't stand by and see my 'usband wronged. You'll ruin him between you, that's what you'll do; go back, Miss, and put down them books this moment. I won't have it, I tell you. I'll not see my 'usband eaten up by the likes of you."

Polly's diction suffered from her passion, and so did her appearance. Her face grew scarlet, her eyes flashed with fury. She put out her hand to push Lottie back, who shrank from her with a cry of dismay—

"Let me pass, please," said Lottie piteously. She could not quarrel

with this woman, she could not even enter so much into conflict with her as to brush past her, and thus escape. She shrank with pain and horror from the excited creature in her way.

"It's you that will have to go back," said Polly, "not me. I'm the mistress of this house, you'll please to recollect, Miss Lottie. Your father's been a deal too good, he's let you do just what you pleased, but that's not my style. I begins as I mean to end. You shan't stay here, I tell you, whatever you may think, if you want to trample upon me, and eat up every penny he has. Go and take off your things this moment, and see if you can't be a little use in the house."

Lottie was struck dumb and could not tell what to say. She had not been cared for much in her life, but she had never been restrained, and the sensation was new to her. She did not know how to reply. "I do not wish to be in your way," she cried. "I shall not stay long nor trouble you long, but please do not interfere with me while I am here. I must go."

"And I say you shan't go!" said Polly, raising her voice after the manner of her kind, and stamping her foot on the floor. "If you disobey me, I won't have you here not another day. I'll turn you out if it was twelve o'clock at night. I'll show you that I am mistress in my own house. Do you think I'm going to be outfaced by you, and treated like the dirt below your feet? Go and take off your things this moment, and try if you can't settle to a bit of work. Out of this house you shan't go, not a single step."

"I say, stand out of the way," said Law; he had come out of the dining-room with his hands in his pockets, having just finished his dinner. Law was not easily moved, but he had now made up his mind that he was on Lottie's side. "Don't give yourself airs to her. She is not of your sort," he said. "The governor may let you do many things, but not bully her. Look here, Polly, you'd better stand out of her way."

"And who are you, you lazy useless lout, that dares to call me Polly?" she cried. "Polly, indeed! your father's wife, and far better than you. I'll make him put you to the door, too, you idle low fellow, spending your time with a pack of silly, dressing, useless girls——"

"I say, stop that," cried Law, growing red and seizing her suddenly by the arm; he stood upon no ceremony with Polly, though she was his father's wife; but he gave an uneasy alarmed glance at Lottie. "There's some one waiting for you outside," he cried. "Lottie, go."

She did not wait for any more. Trembling and horrified, she ran past and got out breathless, hastily closing the door behind her. The door had been open, and Mrs. O'Shaughnessy outside—drawing her skirts round her, physically and metaphorically, so as to avoid all pollution, yet listening to everything she could hear, was walking up and down the pavement. "Me poor child!" the good Irishwoman said, half sorry, half delighted to hear the first of the scandal. "Already! has it come to this? Me heart is sore for ye, Lottie me dear!"

Hours in a Library.

No. XIX.—Landor's Imaginary Conversations.

When Mr. Forster brought out the collected edition of Landor's works, the critics were generally embarrassed. They evaded for the most part any committal of themselves to an estimate of their author's merits, and were generally content to say that we might now look forward to a definitive judgment in the ultimate court of literary appeal. Such an attitude of suspense was natural enough. Landor is perhaps the most striking instance in modern literature of a radical divergence of opinion between the connoisseurs and the mass of readers. The general public have never been induced to read him, in spite of the lavish applauses of some self-constituted authorities. One may go further. It is doubtful whether those who aspire to a finer literary palate than is possessed by the vulgar herd are really so keenly appreciative as the innocent reader of published remarks might suppose. Hypocrisy in matters of taste—whether of the literal or metaphorical kind—is the commonest of vices. There are vintages, both material and intellectual, which are more frequently praised than heartily enjoyed. I have heard very good judges whisper in private that they have found Landor dull; and the rare citations made from his works often betray a very perfunctory study of them. Not long ago, for example, an able critic quoted a passage from one of the *Imaginary Conversations* to prove that Landor admired Milton's prose, adding the remark that it might probably be taken as an expression of his real sentiments, although put in the mouth of a dramatic person. To any one who has read Landor with ordinary attention, it seems as absurd to speak in this hypothetical manner as it would be to infer from some incidental allusion that Mr. Ruskin admires Turner. Landor's adoration for Milton is one of the most conspicuous of his critical propensities. There are, of course, many eulogies upon Landor of undeniable weight. They are hearty, genuine, and from competent judges. Yet the enthusiasm of such admirable critics as Mr. Emerson and Mr. Lowell may be carped at by some who fancy that every American enjoys a peculiar sense of complacency when rescuing an English genius from the neglect of his own countrymen. If Mr. Browning and Mr. Swinburne have been conspicuous in their admiration, it might be urged that neither of them has too strong desire to keep to that beaten high road of the commonplace, beyond which even the best guides meet with pitfalls. Southey's praises of Landor were sincere and emphatic;

but it must be added that they provoke a recollection of one of Johnson's shrewd remarks. "The reciprocal civility of authors," says the Doctor, "is one of the most risible scenes in the farce of life." One forgives poor Southey indeed for the vanity which enabled him to bear up so bravely against anxiety and repeated disappointment; and if both he and Landor found that "reciprocal civility" helped them to bear the disregard of contemporaries, one would not judge them harshly. It was simply a tacit agreement to throw their harmless vanity into a common stock. Of Mr. Forster, Landor's faithful friend and admirer, one can only say that in his writing about Landor, as upon other topics, we are distracted between the respect due to his strong feeling for the excellent in literature, and the undeniable fact that his criticisms have a very blunt edge, and that his eulogies are apt to be indiscriminate.

Southey and Wordsworth had a simple method of explaining the neglect of a great author. According to them contemporary neglect affords a negative presumption in favour of permanent reputation. No lofty poet has honour in his own generation. Southey's conviction that his ponderous epics would make the fortune of his children is a pleasant instance of self-delusion. But the theory is generally admitted in regard to Wordsworth; and Landor accepted and defended it with characteristic vigour. "I have published," he says in the conversation with Hare, "five volumes of *Imaginary Conversations*: cut the worst of them through the middle, and there will remain in the decimal fraction enough to satisfy my appetite for fame. I shall dine late; but the dining-room will be well-lighted, the guests few and select." He recurs frequently to the doctrine. "Be patient!" he says, in another character. "From the higher heavens of poetry, it is long before the radiance of the brightest star can reach the world below. We hear that one man finds out one beauty, another man finds out another, placing his observatory and instruments on the poet's grave. The worms must have eaten us before we rightly know what we are. It is only when we are skeletons that we are boxed and ticketed and prized and shown. Be it so! I shall not be tired of waiting." Conscious, as he says in his own person, that in 2,000 years there have not been five volumes of prose (the work of one author) equal to his *Conversations*, he could indeed afford to wait: if conscious of earthly things, he must be waiting still.

This superlative self-esteem strikes one, to say the truth, as part of Landor's abiding boyishness. It is only in schoolboy themes that we are still inclined to talk about the devouring love of fame. Grown-up men look rightly with some contempt upon such aspirations. What work a man does is really done in, or at least through, his own generation; and the posthumous fame which poets affect to value means, for the most part, being known by name to a few antiquarians, schoolmasters, or secluded students. When the poet, to adopt Landor's metaphor, has become a luminous star, his superiority to those which have grown dim by distance is for the first time clearly demonstrated. We can still see

him, though other bodies of his system have vanished into the infinite depths of oblivion. But he has also ceased to give appreciable warmth or light to ordinary human beings. He is a splendid name, but not a living influence. There are, of course, exceptions and qualifications to any such statements, but I have a suspicion that even Shakspeare's chief work may have been done in the Globe Theatre, to living audiences, who felt what they never thought of criticising, and were quite unable to measure; and that spite of all æsthetic philosophers and minute antiquarians and judicious revivals, his real influence upon men's minds has been for the most part declining as his fame has been spreading. To defend or fully expound this heretical dogma would take too much space. The "late-dinner" theory, however, as held by Wordsworth and Landor, is subject to one less questionable qualification. It is an utterly untenable proposition that great men have been generally overlooked in their own day.

If we run over the chief names of our literature, it would be hard to point to one which was not honoured, and sometimes honoured to excess, during its proprietor's lifetime. It is, indeed, true that much ephemeral underwood has often hidden in part the majestic forms which now stand out as sole relics of the forest. It is true also that the petty spite and jealousy of contemporaries, especially of their ablest contemporaries, has often prevented the full recognition of great men. And there have been some whose fame, like that of Bunyan and Defoe, has extended amongst the lower sphere of readers before receiving the ratification of constituted judges. But such irregularities in the distribution of fame do not quite meet the point. I doubt whether one could mention a single case in which an author, overlooked at the time, both by the critics and the mass, has afterwards become famous; and the cases are very rare in which a reputation once decayed has again taken root and shown real vitality. The experiment of resuscitation has been tried of late years with great pertinacity. The forgotten images of our seventeenth-century ancestors have been brought out of the lumber-room amidst immense flourishes of trumpets, but they are terribly worm-eaten; and all efforts to make their statues once more stand firmly on their pedestals have generally failed. Landor himself refused to see the merits of the mere "mushrooms," as he somewhere called them, which grew beneath the Shakspearian oak; and though such men as Chapman, Webster, and Ford have received the warmest eulogies of Lamb and other able successors, their vitality is spasmodic and uncertain. We read them, if we read them, at the point of the critic's bayonet.

The case of Wordsworth is no precedent for Landor. Wordsworth's fame was for a long time confined to a narrow sect, and he did all in his power to hinder its spread by wilful disregard of the established canons—even when founded in reason. A reformer who will not court the prejudices even of his friends is likely to be slow in making converts. But it is one thing to be slow in getting a hearing, and another in attracting men

who are quite prepared to hear. Wordsworth resembled a man coming into a drawing-room with muddy boots and a smock-frock. He courted disgust, and such courtship is pretty sure of success. But Landor made his bow in full court-dress. In spite of the difficulty of his poetry, he had all the natural graces which are apt to propitiate cultivated readers. His prose has merits so conspicuous and so dear to the critical mind, that one might have expected his welcome from the connoisseurs to be warm even beyond the limit of sincerity. To praise him was to announce one's own possession of a fine classical taste, and there can be no greater stimulus to critical enthusiasm. One might have guessed that he would be a favourite with all who set up for a discernment superior to that of the vulgar; though the causes which must obstruct a wide recognition of his merits are sufficiently obvious. It may be interesting to consider the cause of his illsuccess with some fulness; and it is a comfort to the critic to reflect that in such a case even obtuseness is in some sort a qualification; for it will enable one to sympathise with the vulgar insensibility to the offered delicacy, if only to substitute articulate rejection for simple stolid silence.

I do not wish, indeed, to put forward such a claim too unreservedly. I will merely take courage to confess that Landor very frequently bores me. So do a good many writers whom I thoroughly admire. If any courage be wanted for such a confession, it is certainly not when writing upon Landor that one should be reticent for want of example. Nobody ever spoke his mind more freely about great expectations. He is, for example, almost the only poet who ever admitted that he could not read Spenser continuously. Even Milton in Landor's hands, in defiance of his known opinions, was made to speak contemptuously of *The Faery Queen*. "There is scarcely a poet of the same eminence," says Porson, obviously representing Landor in this case, "whom I have found it so delightful to read in, and so hard to read through." What Landor here says of Spenser, I should venture to say of Landor. There are few books of the kind into which one may dip with so great a certainty of finding much to admire as the *Imaginary Conversations*, and few of any high reputation which are so certain to become wearisome after a time. My apology, if apology be needed, shall be given presently. But I must also admit, that on thinking of the whole five volumes, so emphatically extolled by their author, I feel certain twinges of remorse. There is a vigour of feeling, an originality of character, a fineness of style which makes one understand, if not quite agree to, the audacious self-commendation. Part of the effect is due simply to the sheer quantity of good writing. Take any essay separately, and one must admit that—to speak only of his contemporaries—there is a greater charm in passages of equal length by Lamb, De Quincey, or even Hazlitt. None of them gets upon such stilts, or seems so anxious to keep the reader at arm's length. But, on the other hand, there is something imposing in so continuous a flow of stately and generally faultless English, with so many weighty aphorisms

rising spontaneously, and without a splashing or disturbance, to the surface of talk, and such an easy felicity of theme unmarred by the flash and glitter of the modern epigrammatic style.* Lamb is both sweeter and more profound, to say nothing of his incomparable humour; but then Lamb's flight is short and uncertain. De Quincey's passages of splendid rhetoric are too often succeeded by dead levels of verbosity and laboured puerilities which make annoyance alternate with enthusiasm. Hazlitt is often spasmodic, and his intrusive egotism is pettish and undignified. But so far at least as his style is concerned, Landor's unruffled stream of continuous harmony excites one's admiration the more the longer one reads. Hardly any one who has written so much has kept so uniformly to a high level, and so seldom descended to empty verbosity or to downright slipshod. It is true that the substance does not always correspond to the perfection of the form. There are frequent discontinuities of thought where the style is smoothest. He reminds one at times of those Alpine glaciers where an exquisitely rounded surface of snow conceals yawning crevasses beneath; and if one stops for a moment to think, one is apt to break through the crust with an abrupt and annoying jerk.

The excellence of Landor's style has, of course, been universally acknowledged, and it is natural that it should be more appreciated by his fellow-craftsmen than by general readers less interested in technical questions. The defects are the natural complements of its merits. When accused of being too figurative, he had a ready reply. "Wordsworth," he says in one of his *Conversations*, "slithers on the soft mud, and cannot stop himself until he comes down. In his poetry there is as much of prose as there is of poetry in the prose of Milton. But prose on certain occasions can bear a great deal of poetry; on the other hand, poetry sinks and swoons under a moderate weight of prose, and neither fan nor burnt feather can bring her to herself again." The remark about the relations of prose and poetry was originally made in a real conversation with Wordsworth in defence of Landor's own luxuriance. Wordsworth, it is said, took it to himself, and not without reason, as appears by its insertion in this *Conversation*. The retort, however happy, is no more conclusive than other cases of the *tu quoque*. We are too often inclined to say to Landor as Southey says to Porson in another place: "Pray leave these tropes and metaphors." His sense suffers from a superfetation of figures, or from the undue pursuit of a figure, till the "wind of the poor phrase is cracked." In the phrase just quoted, for example, we could dispense with the "fan and burnt feather," which have very little relation to the thought. So, to take an instance of the excessively florid, I may quote the phrase in which Marvell defends his want of respect for the

* Let me remark in passing that Landor should apparently have credit for one epigram which has been adopted by more popular authors: "Those who have failed as writers turn reviewers," says Porson to Southey.

aristocracy of his day. "Ever too hard upon great men, Mr. Marvell!" says Bishop Parker; and Marvell replies:—

> Little men in lofty places, who throw long shadows because our sun is setting; the men so little and the places so lofty that casting my pebble, I only show where they stand. They would be less contented with themselves, if they had obtained their preferment honestly. Luck and dexterity always give more pleasure than intellect and knowledge; because they fill up what they fall on to the brim at once; and people run to them with acclamations at the splash. Wisdom is reserved and noiseless, contented with hard earnings, and daily letting go some early acquisition to make room for better specimens. But great is the exultation of a worthless man when he receives for the chips and raspings of his Bridewell logwood a richer reward than the best and wisest for extensive tracts of well-cleared truths! Even he who has sold his country ——

"Forbear, good Mr. Marvell," says Bishop Parker, and one is inclined to sympathise with the poor man drowned under this cascade of tropes. It is certainly imposing, but I should be glad to know the meaning of the metaphor about "luck and dexterity." Passages occur, again, in which we are tempted to think that Landor is falling into an imitation of an obsolete model. Take, for example, the following:—

> A narrow mind cannot be enlarged, nor can a capacious one be contracted. Are we angry with a phial for not being a flask? or do we wonder that the skin of an elephant sits uneasily on a squirrel?

Or this, in reference to Wordsworth:—

> Pastiness and flatness are the qualities of a pancake, and thus far he attained his aim: but if he means it for me, let him place the accessories on the table, lest what is insipid and clammy . . . . grow into duller accretion and moister viscidity the more I masticate it.

Or a remark given to Newton:—

> Wherever there is vacuity of mind, there must either be flaccidity or craving; and this vacuity must necessarily be found in the greater part of princes, from the defects of their education, from the fear of offending them in its progress by interrogations and admonitions, from the habit of rendering all things valueless by the facility with which they are obtained, and transitory by the negligence with which they are received and holden.

Should we not remove the names of Porson and Newton from these sentences, and substitute Sam Johnson? The last passage reads very like a quotation from the *Rambler*. Johnson was, in my opinion and in Landor's, a great writer in spite of his mannerism; but the mannerism is always rather awkward, and in such places we seem to see—certainly not a squirrel—but, say, a thoroughbred horse invested with the skin of an elephant.

These lapses into the inflated are of course exceptional with Landor. There can be no question of the fineness of his perception in all matters of literary form. To say that his standard of style is classical is to repeat a commonplace too obvious for repetition, except to add a doubt whether he is not often too ostentatious and self-conscious in his classi-

cism. He loves and often exhibits a masculine simplicity and speaks with enthusiasm of Locke and Swift in their own departments. Locke is to be "revered;" he is "too simply grand for admiration;" and no one, he thinks, ever had such a power as Swift of saying forcibly and completely whatever he meant to say. But for his own purposes he generally prefers a different model. The qualities which he specially claims seem to be summed up in the conversation upon Bacon's Essays between Newton and Barrow. Cicero and Bacon, says Barrow, have more wisdom between them than all the philosophers of antiquity. Newton's review of the Essays, he adds, "hath brought back to my recollection so much of shrewd judgment, so much of rich imagery, such a profusion of truths so plain as (without his manner of exhibiting them) to appear almost unimportant, that in various high qualities of the human mind I must acknowledge not only Cicero, but every prose writer among the Greeks, to stand far below him. Cicero is least valued for his highest merits, his fulness and his perspicuity. Bad judges (and how few are not so!) desire in composition the concise and obscure; not knowing that the one most frequently arises from paucity of materials, and the other from inability to manage and dispose them." Landor aims, like Bacon, at rich imagery, at giving to thoughts which appear plain more value by fineness of expression, and at compressing shrewd judgments into weighty aphorisms. He would equally rival Cicero in fulness and perspicuity; whilst a severe rejection of everything slovenly or superfluous would save him from ever deviating into the merely florid. So far as style can be really separated from thought, we may admit unreservedly that he has succeeded in his aim, and has attained a rare harmony of tone and colouring.

There may, indeed, be some doubt as to his perspicuity. Southey said that Landor was obscure, whilst adding that he could not explain the cause of the obscurity. Causes enough may be suggested. Besides his incoherency his love of figures which sometimes become half detached from the underlying thought, and an over-anxiety to avoid mere smartness which sometimes leads to real vagueness, he expects too much from his readers, or perhaps despises them too much. He will not condescend to explanation if you do not catch his drift at half a word. He is so desirous to round off his transitions gracefully, that he obliterates the necessary indications of the main divisions of the subject. When criticising Milton or Dante, he can hardly keep his hand off the finest passages in his desire to pare away superfluities. Treating himself in the same fashion, he leaves none of those little signs which, like the typographical hand prefixed to a notice, are extremely convenient, though strictly superfluous. It is doubtless unpleasant to have the hard framework of logical divisions showing too distinctly in an argument, or to have a too elaborate statement of dates and places and external relations in a romance. But such aids to the memory may be removed too freely. The building may be injured in taking away the scaffolding.

Such remarks, however, will not explain Landor's failure to get a real hold upon a large body of readers. Writers of far greater obscurity and much more repellent blemishes of style to set against much lower merits, have gained a far wider popularity. The want of sympathy between so eminent a literary artist and his time must rest upon some deeper divergence of sentiment. Landor's writings present the same kind of problem as his life. We are told, and we can see for ourselves, that he was a man of many very high, and many very amiable qualities. He was full of chivalrous feeling; capable of the most flowing and delicate courtesy; easily stirred to righteous indignation against every kind of tyranny and bigotry; capable, too, of a tenderness pleasantly contrasted with his outbursts of passing wrath; passionately fond of children, and a true lover of dogs. But with all this, he could never live long at peace with anybody. He was the most impracticable of men, and every turning-point in his career was decided by some vehement quarrel. He had to leave school in consequence of a quarrel, trifling in itself, but aggravated by "a fierce defiance of all authority and a refusal to ask forgiveness." He got into a preposterous scrape at Oxford, and forced the authorities to rusticate him. This branched out into a quarrel with his father. When he set up as a country gentleman at Llanthony Abbey, he managed to quarrel with his neighbours and his tenants, until the accumulating consequences to his purse forced him to go to Italy. On the road thither, he began the first of many quarrels with his wife, which ultimately developed into a chronic quarrel and drove him back to England. From England he was finally dislodged by another quarrel which drove him back to Italy. Intermediate quarrels of minor importance are intercalated between those which provoked decisive crises. The lightheartedness which provoked all these difficulties is not more remarkable than the ease with which he threw them off his mind. Blown hither and thither by his own gusts of passion, he always seems to fall on his feet, and forgets his trouble as a schoolboy forgets yesterday's flogging. On the first transitory separation from his wife, he made himself quite happy by writing Latin verses; and he always seems to have found sufficient consolation in such literary occupation for vexations which would have driven some people out of their mind. He would not, he writes, encounter the rudeness of a certain lawyer to save all his property; but he adds, "I have chastised him in my Latin poetry now in the press." Such a mode of chastisement seems to have been as completely satisfactory to Landor as it doubtless was to the lawyer.

His quarrels do not alienate us, for it is evident that they did not proceed from any malignant passion. If his temper was ungovernable, his passions were not odious, or, in any low sense, selfish. In many, if not all of his quarrels he seems to have had at least a very strong show of right on his side, and to have put himself in the wrong by an excessive insistance upon his own dignity. He was one of those ingenious people who always contrive to be punctilious in the wrong place It is amusing

to observe how Scott generally bestows upon his heroes so keen a sense of honour that he can hardly save them from running their heads against stone walls; whilst to their followers he gives an abundance of shrewd sense which fully appreciates Falstaff's theory of honour. Scott himself managed to combine the two qualities; but poor Landor seems to have had Hotspur's readiness to quarrel on the tenth part of a hair without the redeeming touch of common sense. In a slightly different social sphere, he must, one would fancy, have been the mark of a dozen bullets before he had grown up to manhood: it is not quite clear even now how he avoided duels, unless because he regarded the practice as a Christian barbarism to which the ancients had never condescended.

His position and surroundings tended to aggravate his incoherencies of statement. Like his own Peterborough, he was a man of aristocratic feeling, with a hearty contempt for aristocrats. The expectation that he would one day join the ranks of the country gentlemen unsettled him as a scholar; and when he became a landed proprietor he despised his fellow "barbarians" with a true scholar's contempt. He was not forced into the ordinary professional groove, and yet did not fully imbibe the prejudices of the class who can afford to be idle, and the natural result is an odd mixture of conflicting prejudices. He is classical in taste and cosmopolitan in life, and yet he always retains a certain John-Bull element. His preference of Shakspeare to Racine is associated with, if not partly prompted by, a mere English antipathy to foreigners. He never becomes Italianised so far as to lose his contempt for men whose ideas of sport rank larks with the orthodox partridge. He abuses Castlereagh and poor George III. to his heart's content, and so far flies in the face of British prejudice; but it is by no means as a sympathiser with foreign innovations. His republicanism is strongly dashed with old-fashioned conservatism, and he is proud of a doubtful descent from old worthies of the true English type. Through all his would-be paganism we feel that at bottom he is after all a true-born and wrong-headed Englishman. He never, like Shelley, pushed his quarrel with the old order to the extreme, but remained in a solitary cave of Adullam. "There can be no great genius," says Penn to Peterborough, "where there is not profound and continued reasoning." The remark is too good for Penn; and yet it would be dangerous in Landor's own mouth; for certainly the defect which most strikes us, both in his life and his writings, is just the inconsistency which leaves most people as the reasoning powers develop. His work was marred by the unreasonableness of a nature so impetuous and so absorbed by any momentary gust of passion that he could never bring his thoughts or his plans to a focus, or conform them to a general scheme. His prejudices master him both in speculation and practice. He cannot fairly rise above them or govern them by reference to general principles, or the permanent interests of his life. In the vulgar phrase, he is always ready to cut off his nose to spite his face. He quarrels with his schoolmaster or his wife. In an instant

he is all fire and fury, runs amuck at his best friends, and does irreparable mischief. Some men might try to atone for such offences by remorse. Landor, unluckily for himself, could forget the past as easily as he could ignore the future. He lives only in the present, and can throw himself into a favourite author or compose Latin verses or an imaginary conversation as though schoolmasters or wives, or duns or critics, had no existence. With such a temperament, reasoning, which implies patient contemplation and painful liberation from prejudice, has no fair chance; his principles are not the growth of thought, but the translation into dogmas of intense likes and dislikes, which have grown up in his mind he scarcely knows how, and gathered strength by sheer force of repetition instead of deliberate examination.

His writings reflect—and in some ways only too faithfully—these idiosyncrasies. Southey said that his temper was the only explanation of his faults. "Never did man represent himself in his writings so much less generous, less just, less compassionate, less noble in all respects than he really is. I certainly," he adds, "never knew anyone of brighter genius or of kinder heart." Southey, no doubt, resented certain attacks of Landor's upon his most cherished opinions; and, truly, nothing but continuous separation could have preserved the friendship between two men so peremptorily opposed upon so many essential points. Southey's criticism, though sharpened by such latent antagonisms, has really much force. The *Conversations* give much that Landor's friends would have been glad to ignore; and yet they present such a full-length portrait of the man, that it is better to dwell upon them than upon his poetry, which, moreover, with all its fine qualities, is (in my opinion) of far less intrinsic value. The ordinary reader, however, is repelled from the *Conversations* not only by mere inherent difficulties, but by comments which raise a false expectation. An easy-going critic is apt to assume of any book that it exactly fulfils the ostensible aim of the author. So we are told of *Shakspeare's Examination* (and on the high authority of Charles Lamb), that no one could have written it except Landor or Shakspeare himself. When Bacon is introduced, we are assured that the aphorisms introduced are worthy of Bacon himself. What Cicero is made to say is exactly what he would have said, "if he could;" and the dialogue between Walton, Cotton, and Oldways is, of course, as good as a passage from the *Complete Angler*. In the same spirit we are told that the dialogues were to be "one-act dramas;" and we are informed how the great philosophers, statesmen, poets, and artists of all ages did in fact pass across the stage, each represented to the life, and discoursing in his most admirable style.

All this is easy to say; but unluckily represents what the *Conversations* would have been had they been perfect. To say that they are very far from perfect is only to say that they were the compositions of a man; but Landor was also a man to whom his best friends would hardly attribute a remarkable immunity from fault. The dialogue, it need hardly

be remarked, is one of the most difficult of all forms of composition. One rule, however, would be generally admitted. Landor defends his digressions on the ground that they always occur in real conversations. If we "adhere to one point," he says (in Southey's person), "it is a disquisition, not a conversation." And he adds, with one of his wilful backhanded blows at Plato, that most writers of dialogue plunge into abstruse questions, and "collect a heap of arguments to be blown away by the bloated whiff of some rhetorical charlatan, tricked out in a multiplicity of ribbons for the occasion." Possibly! but for all that, the perfect dialogue ought not, we should say, to be really incoherent. It should include digressions, but the digressions ought to return upon the main subject. The art consists in preserving real unity in the midst of the superficial deviations rendered easy by this form of conversation. The facility of digression is really a temptation, not a privilege. Anybody can write blank verse of a kind, because it so easily slips into prose; and that is why good blank verse is so rare. And anybody can write a decent dialogue if you allow him to ramble as much as we all do in actual talk. The finest philosophical dialogues are those in which a complete logical framework underlies the dramatic structure. They are a perfect fusion of logic and imagination. Instead of harsh divisions and cross-divisions of the subject, and a balance of abstract arguments, we have vivid portraits of human beings, each embodying a different line of thought. But the logic is still seen, though the more carefully hidden the more exquisite the skill of the artist. And the purely artistic dialogue which describes passion or the emotions arising from a given situation should in the same way set forth a single idea, and preserve a dramatic unity of conception at least as rigidly as a full-grown play. So far as Landor used his facilities as an excuse for rambling, instead of so skilfully subordinating them to the main purpose as to reproduce new variations on the central theme, he is clearly in error, or is at least aiming at a lower kind of excellence. And this, it may be said at once, seems to be the most radical defect in the composition of Landor's *Conversations*. They have the fault which his real talk is said to have exemplified. We are told that his temperament "disqualified him for anything like sustained reasoning, and he instinctively backed away from discussion or argument." Many of the written dialogues are a prolonged series of explosions; when one expects a continuous development of a theme, they are monotonous thunder-growls. Landor undoubtedly had a sufficient share of dramatic power to write short dialogues expressing a single situation with most admirable power, delicacy, and firmness of touch. Nor, again, does the criticism just made refer to those longer dialogues which are in reality a mere string of notes upon poems or proposals for reforms in spelling. The slight dramatic form binds together his pencillings from the margins of *Paradise Lost* or Wordsworth's poems very pleasantly, and enables him to give additional effect to vivacious outbursts of praise or censure. But the more elaborate dialogues suffer grievously from this absence of

a true unity. There is not that skilful evolution of a central idea without the rigid formality of scientific discussion which we admire in the real masterpieces of the art. We have a conglomerate not an organic growth; a series of observations set forth with never-failing elegance of style, and often with singular keenness of perception; but they do not take us beyond the starting-point. When Robinson Crusoe crossed the Pyrenees, his guide led him by such dexterous windings and gradual ascents that he found himself across the mountains before he knew where he was. With Landor it is just the opposite. After many digressions and ramblings we find ourselves back on the same side of the original question. We are marking time with admirable gracefulness, but somehow we are not advancing. Naturally flesh and blood grow weary when there is no apparent end to a discussion, except that the author must in time be wearied of performing variations upon a single theme.

We are more easily reconciled to some other faults which are rather due to expectations raised by his critics than to positive errors. No one, for example, would care to notice an anachronism, if Landor did not occasionally put in a claim for accuracy. I have no objection whatever to allow Hooker to console Bacon for his loss of the chancellorship, in calm disregard of the fact that Hooker died some twenty years before Bacon rose to that high office. The fault can be amended by substituting any other name for Hooker's. Nor do I at all wish to find in Landor that kind of archæological accuracy which is sought by some composers of historical romances. Were it not that critics have asserted the opposite, it would be hardly worth while to say that Landor's style seldom condescends to adapt itself to the mouth of the speaker, and that from Demosthenes to Porson every interlocutor has palpably the true Landorian trick of speech. Here and there, it is true, the effect is rather unpleasant. Pericles and Aspasia are apt to indulge in criticism of English customs, and no weak regard for time and place prevents Eubulides from denouncing Canning to Demosthenes. The classical dress becomes so thin on such occasions, that even the small degree of illusion which one may fairly desiderate is too rudely interrupted. The actor does not disguise his voice enough for theatrical purposes. It is perhaps a more serious fault that the dialogue constantly lapses into monologue. We might often remove the names of the talkers as useless interruptions. Some conversations might as well be headed, in legal phraseology, Landor *v.* Landor, or at most Landor *v.* Landor and another—the other being some wretched man of straw or Guy Faux effigy dragged in to be belaboured with weighty aphorisms and talk obtrusive nonsense. Hence sometimes we resent a little the taking in vain of the name of some old friend. It is rather too hard upon Sam Johnson to be made a mere "passive bucket" into which Horne Tooke may pump his philological notions, with scarcely a feeble sputter or two to represent his smashing retorts.

There is yet another criticism or two to be added. The extreme

scrupulosity with which Landor polishes his style and removes superfluities from poetical narrative, smoothing them at times till we can hardly grasp them, might have been applied to some of the wanton digressions in which the dialogues abound. We should have been glad if he had ruthlessly cut out two-thirds of the conversation between Richelieu and others, in which some charming English pastorals are mixed up with a quantity of unmistakable rubbish. But, for the most part, we can console ourselves by a smile. When Landor lowers his head and charges bull-like at the phantom of some king or priest, we are prepared for, and amused by, his impetuosity. Malesherbes discourses with great point and vigour upon French literature, and may fairly diverge into a little politics; but it is certainly comic when he suddenly remembers one of Landor's pet grievances, and the unlucky Rousseau has to discuss a question for which few people could be more ludicrously unfit—the details of a plan for reforming the institution of English justices of the peace. The grave dignity with which the subject is introduced gives additional piquancy to the absurdity. An occasional laugh at Landor is the more valuable because, to say the truth, one is not very likely to laugh with him. Nothing is more difficult for an author—as he here observes in reference to Milton—than to decide upon his own merits as a wit or humourist. I am not quite sure that this is true; for I have certainly found authors distinctly fallible in judging of their own merits as poets and philosophers. But it is undeniable that many a man laughs at his own wit who has to laugh alone. I will not take upon myself to say that Landor was without humour; he has certainly a delicate gracefulness which may be classed with the finer kinds of humour; but if anybody (to take one instance) will read the story which Chaucer tells to Boccaccio and Petrarch and pronounce it to be amusing, I can only say that his notions of humour differ materially from mine. Landor often sins as distinctly, if not as heavily.

Blemishes such as these go some way perhaps to account for Landor's unpopularity. But they are such as might be amply redeemed by his vigour, his fulness, and unflagging energy of style. There is no equally voluminous author of great power who does not fall short of his own highest achievements in a large part of his work, and who is not open to the remark that his achievements are not all that we could have wished. It is doubtless best to take what we can get, and not to repine if we do not get something better, the possibility of which is suggested by the actual accomplishment. If Landor had united to his own powers those of Scott or Shakspeare, he would have been improved. Landor, repenting a little for some censures of Milton, says to Southey, "Are we not somewhat like two little beggar-boys who, forgetting that they are in tatters, sit noticing a few stains and rents in their father's raiment?" "But they love him," replies Southey, and we feel the apology to be sufficient.

Can we make it in the case of Landor? Is he a man whom we can

take to our hearts, treating his vagaries and ill-humours as we do the testiness of a valued friend? Or do we feel that he is one whom it is better to have for an acquaintance than for an intimate? The problem seems to have exercised those who knew him best in life. Many, like Southey or Napier, thought him a man of true nobility and tenderness of character, and looked upon his defects as mere superficial blemishes. If some who came closer seem to have had a rather different opinion, we must allow that a man's personal defects are often unimportant in his literary capacity. It has been laid down as a general rule that poets cannot get on with their wives; and yet they are poets in virtue of being loveable at the core. Landor's domestic troubles need not indicate an incapacity for meeting our sympathies any more than the domestic troubles of Shakspeare, Milton, Swift, Burns, Byron, Shelley, or many others. In his poetry a man should show his best self; and defects, important in the daily life which is made up of trifles, may cease to trouble us when admitted to the inmost recesses of his nature.

Landor, undoubtedly, may be loved; but I fancy that he can be loved unreservedly only by a very narrow circle. For when we pass from the form to the substance—from the manner in which his message is delivered to the message itself—we find that the superficial defects rise from very deep roots. Whenever we penetrate to the underlying character we find something harsh and uncongenial mixed with very high qualities. He has pronounced himself upon a wide range of subjects; there is much criticism, some of it of a very rare and admirable order; much theological and political disquisition; and much exposition, in various forms, of the practical philosophy which every man imbibes according to his faculties in his passage through the world. It would be undesirable to discuss seriously his political or religious notions. To say the truth, they are not really worth discussing; they are little more than vehement explosions of unreasoning prejudice. I do not know whether Landor would have approved the famous aspiration about strangling the last of kings with the entrails of the last priest, but some such sentiment seems to sum up all that he really has to say. His doctrine so far coincides with that of Diderot and other revolutionists, though he has no sympathy with their social aspirations. His utterances, however, remind us too much—in substance, though not in form—of the rhetoric of debating societies. They are as factitious as the old-fashioned appeals to the memory of Brutus. They would doubtless make a sensation at the Union. Diogenes tells us that "all nations, all cities, all communities, should combine in one great hunt, like that of the Scythians at the approach of winter, and follow it" (the kingly power, to wit) "up, unrelentingly to its perdition. The diadem should designate the victim; all who wear it, all who offer it, all who bow to it, should perish." Demosthenes, in less direct language, announces the same plan to Eubulides as the one truth, far more important than any other, and "more conducive to whatever is desirable to the well-educated

and free." We laugh, not because the phrase is overstrained, or intended to have a dramatic truth; for Landor puts similar sentiments into the mouths of all his favourite speakers; but simply because we feel it to be a mere form of swearing. The language would have been less elegant, but the meaning just the same, if he had rapped out a good mouth-filling oath whenever he heard the name of king. When, in reference to some such utterances, Mr. Carlyle said that "Landor's principle is mere rebellion," he was much nettled, and declared himself to be in favour of authority. He despised American republicanism, and regarded Venice as the pattern state. He sympathised in this, as in much else, with the theorists of Milton's time, and would have been approved by Harrington or Algernon Sidney; but, for all that, Mr. Carlyle seems pretty well to have hit the mark. Such republicanism is in reality nothing more than the political expression of intense pride, or, if you prefer the word, self-respect. It is the sentiment of personal dignity, which could not bear the thought that he, Landor, should have to bow the knee to a fool like George III.; or that Milton should have been regarded as the inferior of such a sneak as Charles I. But the same feeling would have been just as much shocked by the claim of a demagogue to override high-spirited gentlemen. Mobs were every whit as vile as kings. He might have stood for Shakspeare's Coriolanus, if Coriolanus had not an unfortunate want of taste in his language. Landor, indeed, being never much troubled as to consistency, is fond of dilating on the absurdity of any kind of hereditary rank; but he sympathises, to his last fibre, with the spirit fostered by the existence of an aristocratic caste, and producible, so far as our experience has gone, in no other way. He is generous enough to hate all oppression in every form, and therefore to hate the oppression exercised by a noble as heartily as oppression exercised by a king. He is a big boy ready to fight anyone who bullies his fag; but with no doubts as to the merits of fagging. But then he never chooses to look at the awkward consequences of his opinion. When talking of politics, an aristocracy full of virtue and talent, ruling on generous principles a people sufficiently educated to obey its natural leaders, is the ideal which is vaguely before his mind. To ask how it is to be produced without hereditary rank, or to be prevented from degenerating into a tyrannical oligarchy, or to be reconciled at all with modern principles, is simply to be impertinent. He answers all such questions by putting himself in imagination into the attitude of a Pericles or Demosthenes or Milton, fulminating against tyrants and keeping the mob in its place by the ascendancy of genius. To recommend Venice as a model is simply to say that you have nothing but contempt for all politics. It is as if a lad should be asked whether he preferred to join a cavalry or an infantry regiment, and should reply that he would only serve under Leonidas.

His religious principles are in the same way little more than the assertion that he will not be fettered in mind or body by any priest on earth. The priest is to him what he was to the deists and materialists

of the eighteenth century—a juggling impostor who uses superstition as an instrument for creeping into the confidence of women and cowards, and burning brave men; but he has no dreams of the advent of a religion of reason. He ridicules the notion that truth will prevail: it never has and it never will. At bottom he prefers paganism to Christianity because it was tolerant and encouraged art, and allowed philosophers to enjoy as much privilege as they can ever really enjoy—that of living in peace and knowing that their neighbours are harmless fools. After a fashion he likes his own version of Christianity, which is superficially that of many popular preachers: Be tolerant, kindly, and happy, and don't worry your head about dogmas, or become a slave to priests. But then one also feels that humility is generally regarded as an essential part of Christianity, and that in Landor's version it is replaced by something like its antithesis. You should do good too, as you respect yourself and would be respected by men; but the chief good is the philosophic mind, which can wrap itself in its own consciousness of worth, and enjoy the finest pleasures of life without superstitious asceticism. Let the vulgar amuse themselves with the playthings of their creed, so long as they do not take to playing with faggots. Stand apart and enjoy your own superiority with good-natured contempt.

One of his longest and, in this sense, most characteristic dialogues, is that between Penn and Peterborough. Peterborough is the ideal aristocrat with a contempt for the actual aristocracy; and Penn represents the religion of common sense. "Teach men to calculate rightly and thou wilt have taught them to live religiously," is Penn's sentiment, and perhaps not too unfaithful to the original. No one could have a more thorough contempt for the mystical element in Quakerism than Landor; but he loves Quakers as sober, industrious, easy-going people, who regard good-humour and comfort as the ultimate aim of religious life, and who manage to do without lawyers or priests. Peterborough, meanwhile, represents his other side—the haughty, energetic, cultivated aristocrat, who, on the ground of their common aversions, can hold out a friendly hand to the quiet Quaker. Landor, of course, is both at once. He is the noble who rather enjoys giving a little scandal at times to his drab-suited companion; but, on the whole, thinks that it would be an excellent world if the common people would adopt this harmless form of religion, which tolerates other opinions and does not give any leverage to kings, insolvent aristocrats, or intriguing bishops.

Landor's critical utterances reveal the same tendencies. Much of the criticism has of course an interest of its own. It is the judgment of a real master of language upon many technical points of style, and the judgment, moreover, of one who can look even upon classical poets as one who breathes the same atmosphere at an equal elevation, and who speaks out like a cultivated gentleman, not as a schoolmaster or a specialist. But putting aside this and the crotchets about spelling, which have been dignified with the name of philological theories, the general direction of his sympa-

thies is eminently characteristic. Landor of course pays the inevitable homage to the great names of Plato, Dante, and Shakspeare, and yet it would be scarcely unfair to say that he hates Plato, that Dante gives him far more annoyance than pleasure, and that he really cares little for Shakspeare. The last might be denied on the ground of isolated expressions. "A rib of Shakspeare," he says, "would have made a Milton: the same portion of Milton all poets born ever since." But he speaks of Shakspeare in conventional terms, and seldom quotes or alludes to him. When he touches Milton his eyes brighten and his voice takes a tone of reverent enthusiasm. His ear is dissatisfied with everything for days and weeks after the harmony of *Paradise Lost*. "Leaving this magnificent temple, I am hardly to be pacified by the fairy-built chambers, the rich cupboards of embossed plate and the omnigenous images of Shakspeare." That is his genuine impression. Some readers may appeal to that *Examination of Shakspeare* which (as we have seen) was held by Lamb to be beyond the powers of any other writer except its hero. I confess that, in my opinion, Lamb could have himself drawn a far more sympathetic portrait of Shakspeare, and that Scott would have brought out the whole scene with incomparably greater vividness. Call it a morning in an English country-house in the sixteenth century, and it will be full of charming passages along with some laborious failures. But when we are forced to think of Slender and Shallow, and Sir Hugh Evans, and the Shakspearian method of portraiture, the personages in Landor's talk seem half asleep and terribly given to twaddle. His view of Dante is less equivocal. In the whole *Inferno*, Petrarca (evidently representing Landor) finds nothing admirable but the famous descriptions of Francesca and Ugolino. They are the "greater and lesser oases" in a vast desert. And he would pare one of these fine passages to the quick, whilst the other provokes the remark ("we must whisper it") that Dante is "the great master of the disgusting." He seems really to prefer Boccaccio and Ovid, to say nothing of Homer and Virgil. Plato is denounced still more unsparingly. From Aristotle and Diogenes down to Lord Chatham, assailants are set on to worry him, and tear to pieces his gorgeous robes with just an occasional perfunctory apology. Even Lady Jane Grey is deprived of her favourite. She consents on Ascham's petition to lay aside books, but she excepts Cicero, Epictetus, Plutarch, and Polybius: the "others I do resign;" they are good for the arbour and garden walk, but not for the fireside or pillow. This is surely to wrong the poor soul; but Landor is intolerant in his enthusiasm for his philosophical favourites. Epicurus is the teacher whom he really delights to honour, and Cicero is forced to confess in his last hours that he has nearly come over to the camp of his old adversary.

It is easy to interpret the meaning of these prejudices. Landor hates and despises the romantic and the mystic. He has not the least feeling for the art which owes its powers to suggestions of the infinite, or to symbols forced into grotesqueness by the effort to express that for which

no thought can be adequate. He refuses to bother himself with allegory or dreamy speculation, and, unlike Sir T. Browne, hates to lose himself in an "O Altitudo!" He cares nothing for Dante's inner thoughts, and sees only a hideous chamber of horrors in the *Inferno*. Plato is a mere compiler of idle sophistries and contemptible to the common sense and worldly wisdom of Locke and Bacon. In the same spirit he despised Wordsworth's philosophising as heartily as Jeffrey, and though he tried to be just, could really see nothing in him except the writer of good rustic idylls, and of one good piece of paganism, the *Laodamia*.* From such a point of view he ranks him below Burns, Scott, and Cowper, and makes poor Southey consent—Southey who ranked Wordsworth with Milton!

These tendencies are generally summed up by speaking of Landor's objectivity and Hellenism. I have no particular objection to those words except that they seem rather vague and to leave our problem untouched. A man may be as "objective" as you please in a sense, and as thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Greek art, and yet may manage to fall in with the spirit of our own times. The truth is, I fancy, that a simpler name may be given to Landor's tastes, and that we may find them exemplified nearer home. There is many a good country gentleman who rides well to hounds, and is most heartily "objective" in the sense of hating metaphysics and elaborate allegory and unintelligible art, and preferring a glass of wine and a talk with a charming young lady to mystic communings with the worldspirit; and as for Landor's Hellenism, that surely ought not to be an uncommon phenomenon in the region of English public schools. It is really an odd result that we should be so much puzzled by the very man who seems to realise precisely that ideal of culture upon which our most popular system of education is apparently moulded. Here at last is a man who really takes the habit of writing Latin verses seriously; making it a consolation in trouble as well as an elegant amusement. He hopes to rest his fame upon it, and even by a marvellous *tour de force* writes a great deal of English poetry which for all the world reads exactly like a first-rate copy of modern Greek Iambics. For once we have produced just what the system ought to produce, and yet we cannot make him out.

The reason for our not producing more Landors is indeed pretty simple. Men of real poetic genius are exceedingly rare at all times, and it is still rarer to find such a man who remains a schoolboy all his life. Landor is precisely a glorified and sublime edition of the model sixth-form lad, only with an unusually strong infusion of schoolboy perversion. Perverse lads, indeed, generally kick over the traces at an earlier point: refuse to learn anything. Boys who take kindly to the classical are generally good, that is to say, docile. They develop into tutors and

* De Quincey gets into a curious puzzle about Landor's remarks, asking which of Wordsworth's poems is meant; and making oddly erroneous guesses.

professors; or, when the cares of life begin to press, they start their cargo of classical lumber and fill the void with law or politics. Landor's peculiar temperament led him to kick against authority, whilst he yet imbibed the spirit of the teaching fully, and in some respects rather too fully.

The impatient and indomitable temper which made quiet or continuous meditation impossible, and the accidental circumstances of his life, left him in possession of qualities which are in most men subdued or expelled by the hard discipline of life. Brought into impulsive collision with all kinds of authorities, he set up a kind of schoolboy republicanism, and used all his poetic eloquence to give it an air of reality. But he never cared to bring it into harmony with any definite system of thought, or let his outbursts of temper transport him into settled antagonism with accepted principles. His aristocratic feeling lay deeper than his quarrels with aristocrats. He troubled himself just as little about theological as about political theories: he was as utterly impervious as the dullest of squires to the mystic philosophy imported by Coleridge, and found the world quite rich enough in sources of enjoyment without tormenting himself about the unseen and the ugly superstitions which thrive in mental twilight. But he had quarrelled with parsons as much as with lawyers, and could not stand the thought of a priest interfering with his affairs or limiting his amusements. And so he set up as a tolerant and hearty disciple of Epicurus. Chivalrous sentiment and an exquisite perception of the beautiful saved him from any gross interpretation of his master's principles; although, to say the truth, he shows an occasional laxity on some points which savours of the easy-going pagan, or perhaps of the noble of the old school. As he grew up he drank deep of English literature, and sympathised with the grand republican pride of Milton—as sturdy a rebel as himself, and a still nobler because more serious rhetorician. He went to Italy, and as he imbibed Italian literature, sympathised with the joyous spirit of Boccaccio and the eternal boyishness of classical art. Mediævalism and all mystic philosophies remained unintelligible to this true-born Englishman. Irritated rather than humbled by his incapacity, he cast them aside, pretty much as a schoolboy might throw a Plato at the head of a pedantic master.

The best and most attractive dialogues are those in which he can give free play to this Epicurean sentiment; forget his political mouthing, and inoculate us for the moment with the spirit of youthful enjoyment. Nothing can be more perfectly charming in its way than Epicurus in his exquisite garden, discoursing, on his pleasant knoll, where, with violets, cyclamens, and convolvuluses clustering round, he talks to his lovely girl-disciples upon the true theory of life—temperate enjoyment of all refined pleasures, forgetfulness of all cares, and converse with true chosen spirits far from the noise of the profane vulgar: of the art, in short, by which a man of fine cultivation may make the most of this life, and learn to take death as a calm and happy subsidence into oblivion. Nor far behind is

the dialogue in which Lucullus entertains Cæsar in his delightful villa, and illustrates by example, as well as precept, Landor's favourite doctrine of the vast superiority of the literary to the active life. Politics, as he makes even Demosthenes admit, are the "sad refuge of restless minds, averse from business and from study." And certainly there are moods in which we could ask nothing better than to live in a remote villa, in which wealth and art have done everything in their power to give all the pleasures compatible with perfect refinement and contempt of the grosser tastes. Only it must be admitted that this is not quite a gospel for the million. And probably the highest triumph is in the Pentameron, where the whole scene is so vividly coloured by so many delicate touches, and such charming little episodes of Italian life, that we seem almost to have seen the fat wheezy poet hoisting himself on to his pampered steed, to have listened to the village gossip, and followed the little flirtations in which the true poets take so kindly an interest; and are quite ready to pardon certain useless digressions and critical vagaries, and to overlook complacently any little laxity of morals.

These, and many of the shorter and more dramatic dialogues, have a rare charm, and the critic will return to analyse, if he can, their technical qualities. But little explanation can be needed, after reading them, of Landor's want of popularity. If he had applied half as much literary skill to expand commonplace sentiment; if he had talked that kind of gentle twaddle by which some recent essayists edify their readers, he might have succeeded in gaining a wide popularity. Or if he had been really, as some writers seem to fancy, a deep and systematic thinker as well as a most admirable artist, he would have extorted a hearing even while provoking dissent. But his boyish waywardness has disqualified him from reaching the deeper sympathies of either class. We feel that the most superhuman of schoolboys has really a rather shallow view of life. His various outbursts of wrath amuse us at best when they do not bore, even though they take the outward form of philosophy or statesmanship. He has really no answer or vestige of answer for any problems of his, nor indeed of any other time, for he has no basis of serious thought. All he can say is, ultimately, that he feels himself in a very uncongenial atmosphere, from which it is delightful to retire, in imagination, to the society of Epicurus, or the study of a few literary masterpieces. That may be very true, but it can be interesting only to a few men of similar taste; and men of profound insight, whether of the poetic or the philosophic temperament, are apt to be vexed by his hasty dogmatism and irritable rejection of much which deserved his sympathy. His wanton quarrel with the world has been avenged by the world's indifference. We may regret the result, when we see what rare qualities have been cruelly wasted, but we cannot fairly shut our eyes to the fact that the world has a very strong case.

An International Episode.

In Two Parts.

PART I.

Four years ago—in 1874—two young Englishmen had occasion to go to the United States. They crossed the ocean at midsummer, and, arriving in New York on the first day of August, were much struck with the fervid temperature of that city. Disembarking upon the wharf, they climbed into one of those huge high-hung coaches which convey passengers to the hotels, and with a great deal of bouncing and bumping, took their course through Broadway. The midsummer aspect of New York is not perhaps the most favourable one; still, it is not without its picturesque and even brilliant side. Nothing could well resemble less a typical English street than the interminable avenue, rich in incongruities, through which our two travellers advanced—looking out on each side of them at the comfortable animation of the sidewalks, the high-coloured, heterogeneous architecture, the huge white marble façades, glittering in the strong, crude light, and bedizened with gilded lettering, the multifarious awnings, banners, and streamers, the extraordinary number of omnibuses, horse-cars, and other democratic vehicles, the vendors of cooling fluids, the white trousers and big straw-hats of the policemen, the tripping gait of the modish young persons on the pavement, the general brightness, newness, juvenility, both of people and things. The young men had exchanged few observations; but in crossing Union Square, in front of the monument to Washington—in the very shadow, indeed, projected by the image of the *pater patriæ*—one of them remarked to the other, "It seems a rum-looking place."

"Ah, very odd, very odd," said the other, who was the clever man of the two.

"Pity it's so beastly hot," resumed the first speaker, after a pause.

"You know we are in a low latitude," said his friend.

"I daresay," remarked the other.

"I wonder," said the second speaker, presently, "if they can give one a bath."

"I daresay not," rejoined the other.

"Oh, I say!" cried his comrade.

This animated discussion was checked by their arrival at the hotel, which had been recommended to them by an American gentleman whose acquaintance they made—with whom, indeed, they became very intimate—on the steamer, and who had proposed to accompany them to

the inn and introduce them, in a friendly way, to the proprietor. This plan, however, had been defeated by their friend's finding that his "partner" was awaiting him on the wharf, and that his commercial associate desired him instantly to come and give his attention to certain telegrams received from St. Louis. But the two Englishmen, with nothing but their national prestige and personal graces to recommend them, were very well received at the hotel, which had an air of capacious hospitality. They found that a bath was not unattainable, and were indeed struck with the facilities for prolonged and reiterated immersion with which their apartment was supplied. After bathing a good deal—more indeed than they had ever done before on a single occasion—they made their way into the dining-room of the hotel, which was a spacious restaurant, with a fountain in the middle, a great many tall plants in ornamental tubs, and an array of French waiters. The first dinner on land, after a sea voyage, is under any circumstances a delightful occasion, and there was something particularly agreeable in the circumstances in which our young Englishmen found themselves. They were extremely good-natured young men; they were more observant than they appeared; in a sort of inarticulate, accidentally dissimulative fashion, they were highly appreciative. This was perhaps especially the case with the elder, who was also, as I have said, the man of talent. They sat down at a little table which was a very different affair from the great clattering see-saw in the saloon of the steamer. The wide doors and windows of the restaurant stood open, beneath large awnings, to a wide pavement, where there were other plants in tubs, and rows of spreading trees, and beyond which there was a large shady square, without any palings and with marble-paved walks. And above the vivid verdure rose other façades of white marble and of pale chocolate-coloured stone, squaring themselves against the deep blue sky. Here, outside, in the light and the shade and the heat, there was a great tinkling of the bells of innumerable street-cars, and a constant strolling and shuffling and rustling of many pedestrians, a large proportion of whom were young women in Pompadour-looking dresses. Within, the place was cool and vaguely-lighted; with the plash of water, the odour of flowers and the flitting of French waiters, as I have said, upon soundless carpets.

"It's rather like Paris, you know," said the younger of our two travellers.

"It's like Paris—only more so," his companion rejoined.

"I suppose it's the French waiters," said the first speaker. "Why don't they have French waiters in London?"

"Fancy a French waiter at a club," said his friend.

The young Englishman stared a little, as if he could not fancy it. "In Paris I'm very apt to dine at a place where there's an English waiter. Don't you know, what's-his-name's, close to the thingumbob? They always set an English waiter at me. I suppose they think I can't speak French."

"Well, you can't." And the elder of the young Englishmen unfolded his napkin.

His companion took no notice whatever of this declaration. "I say," he resumed, in a moment, "I suppose we must learn to speak American. I suppose we must take lessons."

"I can't understand them," said the clever man.

"What the deuce is *he* saying?" asked his comrade, appealing from the French waiter.

"He is recommending some soft-shell crabs," said the clever man.

And so, in desultory observation of the idiosyncrasies of the new society in which they found themselves, the young Englishmen proceeded to dine—going in largely, as the phrase is, for cooling draughts and dishes, of which their attendant offered them a very long list. After dinner they went out and slowly walked about the neighbouring streets. The early dusk of waning summer was coming on, but the heat was still very great. The pavements were hot even to the stout boot-soles of the British travellers, and the trees along the kerb-stone emitted strange exotic odours. The young men wandered through the adjoining square—that queer place without palings, and with marble walks arranged in black and white lozenges. There were a great many benches, crowded with shabby-looking people, and the travellers remarked, very justly, that it was not much like Belgrave Square. On one side was an enormous hotel, lifting up into the hot darkness an immense array of open, brightly-lighted windows. At the base of this populous structure was an eternal jangle of horse-cars, and all round it, in the upper dusk, was a sinister hum of mosquitoes. The ground-floor of the hotel seemed to be a huge transparent cage, flinging a wide glare of gaslight into the street, of which it formed a sort of public adjunct, absorbing and emitting the passers-by promiscuously. The young Englishmen went in with everyone else, from curiosity, and saw a couple of hundred men sitting on divans along a great marble-paved corridor, with their legs stretched out, together with several dozen more standing in a *queue*, as at the ticket-office of a railway station, before a brilliantly illuminated counter, of vast extent. These latter persons, who carried portmanteaux in their hands, had a dejected, exhausted look; their garments were not very fresh, and they seemed to be rendering some mysterious tribute to a magnificent young man with a waxed moustache and a shirt-front adorned with diamond buttons, who every now and then dropped an absent glance over their multitudinous patience. They were American citizens doing homage to an hotel-clerk.

By bed time—in their impatience to taste of a terrestrial couch again our seafarers went to bed early—it was still insufferably hot, and the buzz of the mosquitoes at the open windows might have passed for an audible crepitation of the temperature. "We can't stand this, you know," the young Englishmen said to each other; and they tossed about

all night more boisterously than they had tossed upon the Atlantic billows. On the morrow, their first thought was that they would re-embark that day for England; and then it occurred to them that they might find an asylum nearer at hand. The cave of Æolus became their ideal of comfort, and they wondered where the Americans went when they wished to cool off. They had not the least idea, and they determined to apply for information to Mr. J. L. Westgate. This was the name inscribed in a bold hand on the back of a letter carefully preserved in the pocket-book of our junior traveller. Beneath the address, in the left-hand corner of the envelope, were the words, "Introducing Lord Lambeth and Percy Beaumont, Esq." The letter had been given to the two Englishmen by a good friend of theirs in London, who had been in America two years previously and had singled out Mr. J. L. Westgate from the many friends he had left there as the consignee, as it were, of his compatriots. "He is a capital fellow," the Englishman in London had said, "and he has got an awfully pretty wife. He's tremendously hospitable—he will do everything in the world for you; and as he knows everyone over there, it is quite needless I should give you any other introduction. He will make you see everyone; trust to him for putting you into circulation. He has got a tremendously pretty wife." It was natural that in the hour of tribulation Lord Lambeth and Mr. Percy Beaumont should have bethought themselves of a gentleman whose attractions had been thus vividly depicted; all the more so that he lived in the Fifth Avenue and that the Fifth Avenue, as they had ascertained the night before, was contiguous to their hotel. "Ten to one he'll be out of town," said Percy Beaumont; "but we can at least find out where he has gone, and we can immediately start in pursuit. He can't possibly have gone to a hotter place, you know."

"Oh, there's only one hotter place," said Lord Lambeth, "and I hope he hasn't gone there."

They strolled along the shady side of the street to the number indicated upon the precious letter. The house presented an imposing chocolate-coloured expanse, relieved by facings and window-cornices of florid sculpture, and by a couple of dusty rose-trees, which clambered over the balconies and the portico. This last-mentioned feature was approached by a monumental flight of steps.

"Rather better than a London house," said Lord Lambeth, looking down from this altitude, after they had rung the bell.

"It depends upon what London house you mean," replied his companion. "You have a tremendous chance to get wet between the house-door and your carriage."

"Well," said Lord Lambeth, glancing at the burning heavens, "I 'guess' it doesn't rain so much here!"

The door was opened by a long negro in a white jacket, who grinned familiarly when Lord Lambeth asked for Mr. Westgate.

"He ain't at home, sir; he's down town at his o'fice."

"Oh, at his office?" said the visitors. "And when will he be at home?"

"Well, sir, when he goes out dis way in de mo'ning, he ain't liable to come home all day."

This was discouraging; but the address of Mr. Westgate's office was freely imparted by the intelligent black, and was taken down by Percy Beaumont in his pocket-book. The two gentlemen then returned, languidly, to their hotel, and sent for a hackney-coach; and in this commodious vehicle they rolled comfortably down town. They measured the whole length of Broadway again, and found it a path of fire; and then, deflecting to the left, they were deposited by their conductor before a fresh, light, ornamental structure, ten stories high, in a street crowded with keen-faced, light-limbed young men, who were running about very quickly and stopping each other eagerly at corners and in doorways. Passing into this brilliant building, they were introduced by one of the keen-faced young men—he was a charming fellow, in wonderful cream-coloured garments and a hat with a blue ribbon, who had evidently perceived them to be aliens and helpless—to a very snug hydraulic elevator, in which they took their place with many other persons, and which, shooting upward in its vertical socket, presently projected them into the seventh horizontal compartment of the edifice. Here, after brief delay, they found themselves face to face with the friend of their friend in London. His office was composed of several different rooms, and they waited very silently in one of them after they had sent in their letter and their cards. The letter was not one which it would take Mr. Westgate very long to read, but he came out to speak to them more instantly than they could have expected; he had evidently jumped up from his work. He was a tall, lean personage, and was dressed all in fresh white linen; he had a thin, sharp, familiar face, with an expression that was at one and the same time sociable and business-like, a quick, intelligent eye, and a large brown moustache, which concealed his mouth and made his chin, beneath it, look small. Lord Lambeth thought he looked tremendously clever.

"How do you do, Lord Lambeth—how do you do, sir?" he said, holding the open letter in his hand. "I'm very glad to see you—I hope you're very well. You had better come in here—I think it's cooler;" and he led the way into another room, where there were law-books and papers, and windows wide open beneath striped awnings. Just opposite one of the windows, on a line with his eyes, Lord Lambeth observed the weather-vane of a church steeple. The uproar of the street sounded infinitely far below, and Lord Lambeth felt very high in the air. "I say it's cooler," pursued their host, "but everything is relative. How do you stand the heat?"

"I can't say we like it," said Lord Lambeth; "but Beaumont likes it better than I."

"Well, it won't last," Mr. Westgate very cheerfully declared;

"nothing unpleasant lasts over here. It was very hot when Captain Littledale was here; he did nothing but drink sherry-cobblers. He expresses some doubt in his letter whether I will remember him—as if I didn't remember making six sherry-cobblers for him one day, in about twenty minutes. I hope you left him well; two years having elapsed since then."

"Oh, yes, he's all right," said Lord Lambeth.

"I am always very glad to see your countrymen," Mr. Westgate pursued. "I thought it would be time some of you should be coming along. A friend of mine was saying to me only a day or two ago, 'It's time for the water-melons and the Englishmen.'"

"The Englishmen and the water-melons just now are about the same thing," Percy Beaumont observed, wiping his dripping forehead.

"Ah, well, we'll put you on ice, as we do the melons. You must go down to Newport."

"We'll go anywhere!" said Lord Lambeth.

"Yes, you want to go to Newport—that's what you want to do," Mr. Westgate affirmed. "But let's see—when did you get here?"

"Only yesterday," said Percy Beaumont.

"Ah, yes, by the 'Russia.' Where are you staying?"

"At the 'Hanover,' I think they call it."

"Pretty comfortable?" inquired Mr. Westgate.

"It seems a capital place, but I can't say we like the gnats," said Lord Lambeth.

Mr. Westgate stared and laughed. "Oh, no, of course you don't like the gnats. We shall expect you to like a good many things over here, but we shan't insist upon your liking the gnats; though certainly you'll admit that, as gnats, they are fine, eh? But you oughtn't to remain in the city."

"So we think," said Lord Lambeth. "If you would kindly suggest something——"

"Suggest something, my dear sir?"—and Mr. Westgate looked at him, narrowing his eyelids. "Open your mouth and shut your eyes! Leave it to me, and I'll put you through. It's a matter of national pride with me that all Englishmen should have a good time; and, as I have had considerable practice, I have learned to minister to their wants. I find they generally want the right thing. So just please to consider yourselves my property; and if anyone should try to appropriate you, please to say, 'Hands off; too late for the market.' But let's see," continued the American, in his slow, humorous voice, with a distinctness of utterance which appeared to his visitors to be part of a humorous intention—a strangely leisurely, speculative voice for a man evidently so busy and, as they felt, so professional—"let's see; are you going to make something of a stay, Lord Lambeth?"

"Oh dear no," said the young Englishman; "my cous'n was coming

over on some business, so I just came across, at an hour's notice, for the lark."

"Is it your first visit to the United States?"

"Oh dear, yes."

"I was obliged to come on some business," said Percy Beaumont "and I brought Lambeth along."

"And *you* have been here before, sir?"

"Never—never."

"I thought, from your referring to business ——" said Mr. Westgate.

"Oh, you see I'm by way of being a barrister," Percy Beaumont answered. "I know some people that think of bringing a suit against one of your railways, and they asked me to come over and take measures accordingly."

Mr. Westgate gave one of his slow, keen looks again. "What's your railroad?" he asked.

"The Tennessee Central."

The American tilted back his chair a little, and poised it an instant. "Well, I'm sorry you want to attack one of our institutions," he said, smiling. "But I guess you had better enjoy yourself *first!*"

"I'm certainly rather afraid I can't work in this weather," the young barrister confessed.

"Leave that to the natives," said Mr. Westgate. "Leave the Tennessee Central to me, Mr. Beaumont. Some day we'll talk it over, and I guess I can make it square. But I didn't know you Englishmen ever did any work, in the upper classes."

"Oh, we do a lot of work; don't we, Lambeth?" asked Percy Beaumont.

"I must certainly be at home by the 19th of September," said the younger Englishman, irrelevantly, but gently.

"For the shooting, eh? or is it the hunting—or the fishing?" inquired his entertainer.

"Oh, I must be in Scotland," said Lord Lambeth, blushing a little.

"Well then," rejoined Mr. Westgate, "you had better amuse yourself first, also. You must go down and see Mrs. Westgate."

"We should be so happy—if you would kindly tell us the train," said Percy Beaumont.

"It isn't a train—it's a boat."

"Oh, I see. And what is the name of—a—the—a—town?"

"It isn't a town," said Mr. Westgate, laughing. "It's a—well, what shall I call it? It's a watering-place. In short, it's Newport. You'll see what it is. It's cool; that's the principal thing. You will greatly oblige me by going down there and putting yourself into the hands of Mrs. Westgate. It isn't perhaps for me to say it; but you couldn't be in better hands. Also in those of her sister, who is staying with her. She is very fond of Englishmen. She thinks there is nothing like them."

"Mrs. Westgate or—a—her sister?" asked Percy Beaumont, modestly, yet in the tone of an inquiring traveller.

"Oh, I mean my wife," said Mr. Westgate. "I don't suppose my sister-in-law knows much about them. She has always led a very quiet life; she has lived in Boston."

Percy Beaumont listened with interest. "That, I believe," he said, "is the most—a—intellectual town?"

"I believe it is very intellectual. I don't go there much," responded his host.

"I say, we ought to go there," said Lord Lambeth to his companion.

"Oh, Lord Lambeth, wait till the great heat is over!" Mr. Westgate interposed. "Boston in this weather would be very trying; it's not the temperature for intellectual exertion. At Boston, you know, you have to pass an examination at the city limits; and when you come away they give you a kind of degree."

Lord Lambeth stared, blushing a little; and Percy Beaumont stared a little also—but only with his fine natural complexion; glancing aside after a moment to see that his companion was not looking too credulous, for he had heard a great deal of American humour. "I daresay it is very jolly," said the younger gentleman.

"I daresay it is," said Mr. Westgate. "Only I must impress upon you that at present—to-morrow morning, at an early hour—you will be expected at Newport. We have a house there; half the people in New York go there for the summer. I am not sure that at this very moment my wife can take you in; she has got a lot of people staying with her; I don't know who they all are; only she may have no room. But you can begin with the hotel, and meanwhile you can live at my house. In that way—simply sleeping at the hotel—you will find it tolerable. For the rest, you must make yourself at home at my place. You mustn't be shy, you know; if you are only here for a month that will be a great waste of time. Mrs. Westgate won't neglect you, and you had better not try to resist her. I know something about that. I expect you'll find some pretty girls on the premises. I shall write to my wife by this afternoon's mail, and to-morrow morning she and Miss Alden will look out for you. Just walk right in and make yourself comfortable. Your steamer leaves from this part of the city, and I will immediately send out and get you a cabin. Then, at half-past four o'clock, just call for me here, and I will go with you and put you on board. It's a big boat; you might get lost. A few days hence, at the end of the week, I will come down to Newport, and see how you are getting on."

The two young Englishmen inaugurated the policy of not resisting Mrs. Westgate by submitting, with great docility and thankfulness, to her husband. He was evidently a very good fellow, and he made an impression upon his visitors; his hospitality seemed to recommend itself, consciously—with a friendly wink, as it were—as if it hinted, judicially, that you could not possibly make a better bargain. Lord Lambeth and

His cousin left their entertainer to his labours and returned to their hotel, where they spent three or four hours in their respective shower-baths. Percy Beaumont had suggested that they ought to see something of the town; but "Oh, damn the town!" his noble kinsman had rejoined. They returned to Mr. Westgate's office in a carriage, with their luggage, very punctually; but it must be reluctantly recorded that, this time, he kept them waiting so long that they felt themselves missing the steamer and were deterred only by an amiable modesty from dispensing with his attendance and starting on a hasty scramble to the wharf. But when at last he appeared, and the carriage plunged into the purlieus of Broadway, they jolted and jostled to such good purpose that they reached the huge white vessel while the bell for departure was still ringing and the absorption of passengers still active. It was indeed, as Mr. Westgate had said, a big boat, and his leadership in the innumerable and interminable corridors and cabins, with which he seemed perfectly acquainted, and of which anyone and everyone appeared to have the *entrée*, was very grateful to the slightly bewildered voyagers. He showed them their state-room—a spacious apartment, embellished with gas-lamps, mirrors *en pied* and sculptured furniture—and then, long after they had been intimately convinced that the steamer was in motion and launched upon the unknown stream that they were about to navigate, he bade them a sociable farewell.

"Well, good-by, Lord Lambeth," he said. "Good-by, Mr. Percy Beaumont; I hope you'll have a good time. Just let them do what they want with you. I'll come down by-and-by and look after you."

The young Englishmen emerged from their cabin and amused themselves with wandering about the immense labyrinthine steamer, which struck them as an extraordinary mixture of a ship and an hotel. It was densely crowded with passengers, the larger number of whom appeared to be ladies and very young children; and in the big saloons, ornamented in white and gold, which followed each other in surprising succession, beneath the swinging gas-light, and among the small side-passages where the negro domestics of both sexes assembled with an air of philosophic leisure, everyone was moving to and fro and exchanging loud and familiar observations. Eventually, at the instance of a discriminating black, our young men went and had some "supper," in a wonderful place arranged like a theatre, where, in a gilded gallery, upon which little boxes appeared to open, a large orchestra was playing operatic selections, and, below, people were handing about bills of fare, as if they had been programmes. All this was sufficiently curious; but the agreeable thing later, was to sit out on one of the great white decks of the steamer, in the warm breezy darkness, and, in the vague starlight, to make out the line of low, mysterious coast. The young Englishmen tried American cigars—those of Mr. Westgate—and talked together as they usually talked, with many odd silences, lapses of logic and incongruities of transition; like people who have grown old together, and learned to supply

each other's missing phrases; or, more especially, like people thoroughly conscious of a common point of view, so that a style of conversation superficially lacking in finish might suffice for reference to a fund of associations in the light of which everything was all right.

"We really seem to be going out to sea," Percy Beaumont observed. "Upon my word, we are going back to England. He has shipped us off again. I call that 'real mean.'"

"I suppose it's all right," said Lord Lambeth. "I want to see those pretty girls at Newport. You know he told us the place was an island; and aren't all islands in the sea?"

"Well," resumed the elder traveller after a while, "if his house is as good as his cigars, we shall do very well."

"He seems a very good fellow," said Lord Lambeth, as if this idea had just occurred to him.

"I say, we had better remain at the inn," rejoined his companion, presently. "I don't think I like the way he spoke of his house. I don't like stopping in the house with such a tremendous lot of women."

"Oh, I don't mind," said Lord Lambeth. And then they smoked awhile in silence. "Fancy his thinking we do no work in England!" the young man resumed.

"I daresay he didn't really think so," said Percy Beaumont.

"Well, I guess they don't know much about England over here!" declared Lord Lambeth, humorously. And then there was another long pause. "He was devilish civil," observed the young nobleman.

"Nothing, certainly, could have been more civil," rejoined his companion.

"Littledale said his wife was great fun," said Lord Lambeth.

"Whose wife—Littledale's?"

"This American's—Mrs. Westgate. What's his name? J. L."

Beaumont was silent a moment. "What was fun to Littledale," he said at last, rather sententiously, "may be death to us."

"What do you mean by that?" asked his kinsman. "I am as good a man as Littledale."

"My dear boy, I hope you won't begin to flirt," said Percy Beaumont.

"I don't care. I daresay I shan't begin."

"With a married woman, if she's bent upon it, it's all very well," Beaumont expounded. "But our friend mentioned a young lady—a sister, a sister-in-law. For God's sake, don't get entangled with her."

"How do you mean, entangled?"

"Depend upon it she will try to hook you."

"Oh, bother!" said Lord Lambeth.

"American girls are very clever," urged his companion.

"So much the better," the young man declared.

"I fancy they are always up to some game of that sort," Beaumont continued.

"They can't be worse than they are in England," said Lord Lambeth, judicially.

"Ah, but in England," replied Beaumont, "you have got your natural protectors. You have got your mother and sisters."

"My mother and sisters—" began the young nobleman, with a certain energy. But he stopped in time, puffing at his cigar.

"Your mother spoke to me about it, with tears in her eyes," said Percy Beaumont. "She said she felt very nervous. I promised to keep you out of mischief."

"You had better take care of yourself," said the object of maternal and ducal solicitude.

"Ah," rejoined the young barrister, "I haven't the expectation of a hundred thousand a year—not to mention other attractions."

"Well," said Lord Lambeth, "don't cry out before you're hurt!"

It was certainly very much cooler at Newport, where our travellers found themselves assigned to a couple of diminutive bed-rooms in a far-away angle of an immense hotel. They had gone ashore in the early summer twilight, and had very promptly put themselves to bed; thanks to which circumstance and to their having, during the previous hours, in their commodious cabin, slept the sleep of youth and health, they began to feel, towards eleven o'clock, very alert and inquisitive. They looked out of their windows across a row of small green fields, bordered with low stone walls, of rude construction, and saw a deep blue ocean lying beneath a deep blue sky and flecked now and then with scintillating patches of foam. A strong, fresh breeze came in through the curtainless casements and prompted our young men to observe, generously, that it didn't seem half a bad climate. They made other observations after they had emerged from their rooms in pursuit of breakfast—a meal of which they partook in a huge bare hall, where a hundred negroes, in white jackets, were shuffling about upon an uncarpeted floor; where the flies were superabundant and the tables and dishes covered over with a strange, voluminous integument of coarse blue gauze; and where several little boys and girls, who had risen late, were seated in fastidious solitude at the morning repast. These young persons had not the morning paper before them, but they were engaged in languid perusal of the bill of fare.

This latter document was a great puzzle to our friends, who, on reflecting that its bewildering categories had relation to breakfast alone, had an uneasy prevision of an encyclopædic dinner-list. They found a great deal of entertainment at the hotel, an enormous wooden structure, for the erection of which it seemed to them that the virgin forests of the West must have been terribly deflowered. It was perforated from end to end with immense bare corridors, through which a strong draught was blowing—bearing along wonderful figures of ladies in white morning-dresses and clouds of Valenciennes lace, who seemed to float down the long vistas with expanded furbelows, like angels spreading their wings. In

front was a gigantic verandah, upon which an army might have encamped—a vast wooden terrace, with a roof as lofty as the nave of a cathedral. Here our young Englishmen enjoyed, as they supposed, a glimpse of American society, which was distributed over the measureless expanse in a variety of sedentary attitudes, and appeared to consist largely of pretty young girls, dressed as if for a *fête champêtre*, swaying to and fro in rocking-chairs, fanning themselves with large straw fans, and enjoying an enviable exemption from social cares. Lord Lambeth had a theory, which it might be interesting to trace to its origin, that it would be not only agreeable, but easily possible, to enter into relations with one of these young ladies; and his companion found occasion to check the young nobleman's colloquial impulses.

"You had better take care," said Percy Beaumont, "or you will have an offended father or brother pulling out a bowie-knife."

"I assure you it is all right," Lord Lambeth replied. "You know the Americans come to these big hotels to make acquaintances."

"I know nothing about it, and neither do you," said his kinsman, who, like a clever man, had begun to perceive that the observation of American society demanded a readjustment of one's standard.

"Hang it, then, let's find out!" cried Lord Lambeth with some impatience. "You know, I don't want to miss anything."

"We will find out," said Percy Beaumont, very reasonably. "We will go and see Mrs. Westgate and make all the proper inquiries."

And so the two inquiring Englishmen, who had this lady's address inscribed in her husband's hand upon a card, descended from the verandah of the big hotel and took their way, according to direction, along a large straight road, past a series of fresh-looking villas, embosomed in shrubs and flowers and enclosed in an ingenious variety of wooden palings. The morning was brilliant and cool, the villas were smart and snug, and the walk of the young travellers was very entertaining. Everything looked as if it had received a coat of fresh paint the day before—the red roofs, the green shutters, the clean, bright browns and buffs of the house-fronts. The flower-beds on the little lawns seemed to sparkle in the radiant air, and the gravel in the short carriage-sweeps to flash and twinkle. Along the road came a hundred little basket-phaetons, in which, almost always, a couple of ladies were sitting—ladies in white dresses and long white gloves, holding the reins and looking at the two Englishmen, whose nationality was not elusive, through thick blue veils, tied tightly about their faces as if to guard their complexions. At last the young men came within sight of the sea again, and then, having interrogated a gardener over the paling of a villa, they turned into an open gate. Here they found themselves face to face with the ocean and with a very picturesque structure, resembling a magnified *chalet*, which was perched upon a green embankment just above it. The house had a verandah of extraordinary width all around it, and a great many doors and windows standing open to the verandah. These various

apertures had, in common, such an accessible, hospitable air, such a breezy flutter, within, of light curtains, such expansive thresholds and reassuring interiors, that our friends hardly knew which was the regular entrance, and, after hesitating a moment, presented themselves at one of the windows. The room within was dark, but in a moment a graceful figure vaguely shaped itself in the rich-looking gloom, and a lady came to meet them. Then they saw that she had been seated at a table, writing, and that she had heard them and had got up. She stepped out into the light; she wore a frank, charming smile, with which she held out her hand to Percy Beaumont.

"Oh, you must be Lord Lambeth and Mr. Beaumont," she said. "I have heard from my husband that you would come. I am extremely glad to see you." And she shook hands with each of her visitors. Her visitors were a little shy, but they had very good manners; they responded with smiles and exclamations, and they apologised for not knowing the front door. The lady rejoined, with vivacity, that when she wanted to see people very much she did not insist upon those distinctions, and that Mr. Westgate had written to her of his English friends in terms that made her really anxious. "He said you were so terribly prostrated," said Mrs. Westgate.

"Oh, you mean by the heat?" replied Percy Beaumont. "We were rather knocked up, but we feel wonderfully better. We had such a jolly —a—voyage down here. It's so very good of you to mind."

"Yes, it's so very kind of you," murmured Lord Lambeth.

Mrs. Westgate stood smiling; she was extremely pretty. "Well, I did mind," she said; "and I thought of sending for you this morning, to the Ocean House. I am very glad you are better, and I am charmed you have arrived. You must come round to the other side of the piazza." And she led the way, with a light, smooth step, looking back at the young men and smiling.

The other side of the piazza was, as Lord Lambeth presently remarked, a very jolly place. It was of the most liberal proportions, and with its awnings, its fanciful chairs, its cushions and rugs, its view of the ocean, close at hand, tumbling along the base of the low cliffs whose level tops intervened in lawnlike smoothness, it formed a charming complement to the drawing-room. As such it was in course of use at the present moment; it was occupied by a social circle. There were several ladies and two or three gentlemen, to whom Mrs. Westgate proceeded to introduce the distinguished strangers. She mentioned a great many names, very freely and distinctly; the young Englishmen, shuffling about and bowing, were rather bewildered. But at last they were provided with chairs—low, wicker chairs, gilded and tied with a great many ribbons—and one of the ladies (a very young person, with a little snub nose and several dimples) offered Percy Beaumont a fan. The fan was also adorned with pink love-knots; but Percy Beaumont declined it, although he was very hot. Presently, however, it became cooler; the

breeze from the sea was delicious, the view was charming, and the people sitting there looked exceedingly fresh and comfortable. Several of the ladies seemed to be young girls, and the gentlemen were slim, fair youths, such as our friends had seen the day before in New York. The ladies were working upon bands of tapestry, and one of the young men had an open book in his lap. Beaumont afterwards learned from one of the ladies that this young man had been reading aloud—that he was from Boston and was very fond of reading aloud. Beaumont said it was a great pity that they had interrupted him; he should like so much (from all he had heard) to hear a Bostonian read. Couldn't the young man be induced to go on?

"Oh no," said his informant, very freely; "he wouldn't be able to get the young ladies to attend to him now."

There was something very friendly, Beaumont perceived, in the attitude of the company; they looked at the young Englishmen with an air of animated sympathy and interest; they smiled, brightly and unanimously, at everything either of the visitors said. Lord Lambeth and his companion felt that they were being made very welcome. Mrs. Westgate seated herself between them, and, talking a great deal to each, they had occasion to observe that she was as pretty as their friend Littledale had promised. She was thirty years old, with the eyes and the smile of a girl of seventeen, and she was extremely light and graceful, elegant, exquisite. Mrs. Westgate was extremely spontaneous. She was very frank and demonstrative, and appeared always—while she looked at you delightedly, with her beautiful young eyes,—to be making sudden confessions and concessions, after momentary hesitations.

"We shall expect to see a great deal of you," she said to Lord Lambeth, with a kind of joyous earnestness. "We are very fond of Englishmen here; that is, there are a great many we have been fond of. After a day or two you must come and stay with us; we hope you will stay a long time. Newport's a very nice place when you come really to know it, when you know plenty of people. Of course, you and Mr. Beaumont will have no difficulty about that. Englishmen are very well received here; there are almost always two or three of them about. I think they always like it, and I must say I should think they would. They receive ever so much attention. I must say I think they sometimes get spoiled; but I am sure you and Mr. Beaumont are proof against that. My husband tells me you are a friend of Captain Littledale; he was such a charming man. He made himself most agreeable here, and I am sure I wonder he didn't stay. It couldn't have been pleasanter for him in his own country. Though I suppose it is very pleasant in England, for English people. I don't know myself; I have been there very little. I have been a great deal abroad, but I am always on the Continent. I must say I'm extremely fond of Paris; you know we Americans always are; we go there when we die. Did you ever hear that before? that was said by a great wit, I mean the good Americans; but we are

all good; you'll see that for yourself. All I know of England is London, and all I know of London is that place—on that little corner, you know, where you buy jackets—jackets with that coarse braid and those big buttons. They make very good jackets in London, I will do you the justice to say that. And some people like the hats; but about the hats I was always a heretic; I always got my hats in Paris. You can't wear an English hat—at least, I never could—unless you dress your hair *à l'Anglaise*; and I must say that is a talent I have never possessed. In Paris they will make things to suit your peculiarities; but in England I think you like much more to have—how shall I say it?—one thing for everybody. I mean as regards dress. I don't know about other things; but I have always supposed that in other things everything was different. I mean according to the people—according to the classes, and all that. I am afraid you will think that I don't take a very favourable view; but you know you can't take a very favourable view in Dover Street, in the month of November. That has always been my fate. Do you know Jones's Hotel in Dover Street? That's all I know of England. Of course, every one admits that the English hotels are your weak point. There was always the most frightful fog; I couldn't see to try my things on. When I got over to America—into the light—I usually found they were twice too big. The next time I mean to go in the season; I think I shall go next year. I want very much to take my sister; she has never been to England. I don't know whether you know what I mean by saying that the Englishmen who come here sometimes get spoiled. I mean that they take things as a matter of course—things that are done for them. Now, naturally, they are only a matter of course when the Englishmen are very nice. But, of course, they are almost always very nice. Of course, this isn't nearly such an interesting country as England; there are not nearly so many things to see, and we haven't your country life. I have never seen anything of your country life; when I am in Europe I am always on the Continent. But I have heard a great deal about it; I know that when you are among yourselves in the country you have the most beautiful time. Of course, we have nothing of that sort, we have nothing on that scale. I don't apologise, Lord Lambeth; some Americans are always apologising; you must have noticed that. We have the reputation of always boasting and bragging and waving the American flag; but I must say that what strikes me is that we are perpetually making excuses and trying to smooth things over. The American flag has quite gone out of fashion; it's very carefully folded up, like an old tablecloth. Why should we apologise? The English never apologise—do they? No, I must say I never apologise. You must take us as we come—with all our imperfections on our heads. Of course we haven't your country life, and your old ruins, and your great estates, and your leisure-class, and all that. But if we haven't, I should think you might find it a pleasant change—I think any country is pleasant where they have pleasant manners. Captain Littledale told

me he had never seen such pleasant manners as at Newport; and he had been a great deal in European society. Hadn't he been in the diplomatic service? He told me the dream of his life was to get appointed to a diplomatic post in Washington. But he doesn't seem to have succeeded. I suppose that in England promotion—and all that sort of thing—is fearfully slow. With us, you know, it's a great deal too fast. You see I admit our drawbacks. But I must confess I think Newport is an ideal place. I don't know anything like it anywhere. Captain Littledale told me he didn't know anything like it anywhere. It's entirely different from most watering-places; it's a most charming life. I must say I think that when one goes to a foreign country, one ought to enjoy the differences. Of course there are differences; otherwise what did one come abroad for? Look for your pleasure in the differences, Lord Lambeth; that's the way to do it; and then I am sure you will find American society—at least Newport society—most charming and most interesting. I wish very much my husband were here; but he's dreadfully confined to New York. I suppose you think that is very strange—for a gentleman. But you see we haven't any leisure-class."

Mrs. Westgate's discourse, delivered in a soft, sweet voice, flowed on like a miniature torrent and was interrupted by a hundred little smiles, glances, and gestures, which might have figured the irregularities and obstructions of such a stream. Lord Lambeth listened to her with, it must be confessed, a rather ineffectual attention, although he indulged in a good many little murmurs and ejaculations of assent and deprecation. He had no great faculty for apprehending generalisations. There were some three or four indeed which, in the play of his own intelligence, he had originated, and which had seemed convenient at the moment; but at the present time he could hardly have been said to follow Mrs. Westgate as she darted gracefully about in the sea of speculation. Fortunately she asked for no especial rejoinder, for she looked about at the rest of the company as well, and smiled at Percy Beaumont, on the other side of her, as if he too must understand her and agree with her. He was rather more successful than his companion; for besides being, as we know, cleverer, his attention was not vaguely distracted by close vicinity to a remarkably interesting young girl, with dark hair and blue eyes. This was the case with Lord Lambeth, to whom it occurred after a while that the young girl with blue eyes and dark hair was the pretty sister of whom Mrs. Westgate had spoken. She presently turned to him with a remark which established her identity.

"It's a great pity you couldn't have brought my brother-in-law with you. It's a great shame he should be in New York in these days."

"Oh yes; it's so very hot," said Lord Lambeth.

"It must be dreadful," said the young girl.

"I daresay he is very busy," Lord Lambeth observed.

"The gentlemen in America work too much," the young girl went on.

"Oh, do they? I daresay they like it," said her interlocutor.

"I don't like it. One never sees them."

"Don't you, really?" asked Lord Lambeth. "I shouldn't have fancied that."

"Have you come to study American manners?" asked the young girl.

"Oh, I don't know. I just came over for a lark. I haven't got long." Here there was a pause, and Lord Lambeth began again. "But Mr. Westgate will come down here, will not he?"

"I certainly hope he will. He must help to entertain you and Mr. Beaumont."

Lord Lambeth looked at her a little with his handsome brown eyes. "Do you suppose he would have come down with us, if we had urged him?"

Mr. Westgate's sister-in-law was silent a moment, and then—"I daresay he would," she answered.

"Really!" said the young Englishman. "He was immensely civil to Beaumont and me," he added.

"He is a dear good fellow," the young lady rejoined. "And he is a perfect husband. But all Americans are that," she continued, smiling.

"Really!" Lord Lambeth exclaimed again; and wondered whether all American ladies had such a passion for generalising as these two.

He sat there a good while: there was a great deal of talk; it was all very friendly and lively and jolly. Everyone present, sooner or later, said something to him, and seemed to make a particular point of addressing him by name. Two or three other persons came in, and there was a shifting of seats and changing of places; the gentlemen all entered into intimate conversation with the two Englishmen, made them urgent offers of hospitality and hoped they might frequently be of service to them. They were afraid Lord Lambeth and Mr. Beaumont were not very comfortable at their hotel—that it was not, as one of them said, "so private as those dear little English inns of yours." This last gentleman went on to say that unfortunately, as yet, perhaps, privacy was not quite so easily obtained in America as might be desired; still, he continued, you could generally get it by paying for it; in fact, you could get everything in America nowadays by paying for it. American life was certainly growing a great deal more private; it was growing very much like England. Everything at Newport, for instance, was thoroughly private; Lord Lambeth would probably be struck with that. It was also represented to the strangers that it mattered very little whether their hotel was agreeable, as everyone would want them to make visits; they would stay with other people, and, in any case, they would be a great deal at Mrs. Westgate's. They would find that very charming; it was the pleasantest house in Newport. It was a pity Mr. Westgate was always away; he was a man of the highest ability—very acute, very acute. He worked like a horse and he left his wife—well,

to do about as she liked. He liked her to enjoy herself, and she seemed to know how. She was extremely brilliant, and a splendid talker. Some people preferred her sister; but Miss Alden was very different; she was in a different style altogether. Some people even thought her prettier, and, certainly, she was not so sharp. She was more in the Boston style; she had lived a great deal in Boston and she was very highly educated. Boston girls, it was propounded, were more like English young ladies.

Lord Lambeth had presently a chance to test the truth of this proposition; for on the company rising in compliance with a suggestion from their hostess that they should walk down to the rocks and look at the sea, the young Englishman again found himself, as they strolled across the grass, in proximity to Mrs. Westgate's sister. Though she was but a girl of twenty, she appeared to feel the obligation to exert an active hospitality; and this was perhaps the more to be noticed as she seemed by nature a reserved and retiring person, and had little of her sister's fraternising quality. She was perhaps rather too thin, and she was a little pale; but as she moved slowly over the grass, with her arms hanging at her sides, looking gravely for a moment at the sea and then brightly, for all her gravity, at him, Lord Lambeth thought her at least as pretty as Mrs. Westgate and reflected that if this was the Boston style the Boston style was very charming. He thought she looked very clever; he could imagine that she was highly educated; but at the same time she seemed gentle and graceful. For all her cleverness, however, he felt that she had to think a little what to say; she didn't say the first thing that came into her head; he had come from a different part of the world and from a different society, and she was trying to adapt her conversation. The others were scattering themselves near the rocks; Mrs. Westgate had charge of Percy Beaumont.

"Very jolly place, isn't it?" said Lord Lambeth. "It's a very jolly place to sit."

"Very charming," said the young girl; "I often sit here; there are all kinds of cosy corners—as if they had been made on purpose."

"Ah! I suppose you have had some of them made," said the young man.

Miss Alden looked at him a moment. "Oh no, we have had nothing made. It's pure nature."

"I should think you would have a few little benches—rustic seats and that sort of thing. It might be so jolly to sit here, you know," Lord Lambeth went on.

"I am afraid we haven't so many of those things as you," said the young girl, thoughtfully.

"I daresay you go in for pure nature, as you were saying. Nature, over here, must be so grand, you know." And Lord Lambeth looked about him.

The little coast-line hereabouts was very pretty, but it was not at all grand; and Miss Alden appeared to rise to a perception of this fact.

'I am afraid it seems to you very rough," she said. "It's not like the coast scenery in Kingsley's novels."

"Ah, the novels always overdo it, you know," Lord Lambeth rejoined. "You must not go by the novels."

They were wandering about a little on the rocks, and they stopped and looked down into a narrow chasm where the rising tide made a curious bellowing sound. It was loud enough to prevent their hearing each other, and they stood there for some moments in silence. The young girl looked at her companion, observing him attentively, bu covertly, as women, even when very young, know how to do. Lord Lambeth repaid observation; tall, straight, and strong, he was handsome as certain young Englishmen, and certain young Englishmen almost alone, are handsome; with a perfect finish of feature and a look of intellectual repose and gentle good temper which seemed somehow to be consequent upon his well-cut nose and chin. And to speak of Lord Lambeth's expression of intellectual repose is not simply a civil way of saying that he looked stupid. He was evidently not a young man of an irritable imagination; he was not, as he would himself have said, tremendously clever; but, though there was a kind of appealing dulness in his eye, he looked thoroughly reasonable and competent, and his appearance proclaimed that to be a nobleman, an athlete, and an excellent fellow, was a sufficiently brilliant combination of qualities. The young girl beside him, it may be attested without further delay, thought him the handsomest young man she had ever seen; and Bessie Alden's imagination, unlike that of her companion, was irritable. He, however, was also making up his mind that she was uncommonly pretty.

"I daresay it's very gay here—that you have lots of balls and parties," he said; for, if he was not tremendously clever, he rather prided himself on having, with women, a sufficiency of conversation.

"Oh yes, there is a great deal going on," Bessie Alden replied. "There are not so many balls, but there are a good many other things. You will see for yourself; we live rather in the midst of it."

"It's very kind of you to say that. But I thought you Americans were always dancing."

"I suppose we dance a good deal; but I have never seen much of it. We don't do it much, at any rate, in summer. And I am sure," said Bessie Alden, "that we don't have so many balls as you have in England."

"Really!" exclaimed Lord Lambeth. "Ah, in England it all depends, you know."

"You will not think much of our gaieties," said the young girl, looking at him with a little mixture of interrogation and decision which was peculiar to her. The interrogation seemed earnest and the decision seemed arch; but the mixture, at any rate, was charming. "Those things, with us, are much less splendid than in England."

"I fancy you don't mean that," said Lord Lambeth, laughing.

"I assure you I mean everything I say," the young girl declared

"Certainly, from what I have read about English society, it is very different."

"Ah, well, you know," said her companion, "those things are often described by fellows who know nothing about them. You mustn't mind what you read."

"Oh, I *shall* mind what I read!" Bessie Alden rejoined. "When I read Thackeray and George Eliot, how can I help minding them?"

"Ah, well, Thackeray—and George Eliot," said the young nobleman; "I haven't read much of them."

"Don't you suppose they know about society?" asked Bessie Alden.

"Oh, I daresay they know; they were so very clever. But these fashionable novels," said Lord Lambeth, "they are awful rot, you know."

His companion looked at him a moment with her dark blue eyes, and then she looked down in the chasm where the water was tumbling about. "Do you mean Mrs. Gore, for instance?" she said presently, raising her eyes.

"I am afraid I haven't read that either," was the young man's rejoinder, laughing a little and blushing. "I am afraid you'll think I am not very intellectual."

"Reading Mrs. Gore is no proof of intellect. But I like reading everything about English life—even poor books. I am so curious about it."

"Aren't ladies always curious?" asked the young man, jestingly.

But Bessie Alden appeared to desire to answer his question seriously. "I don't think so—I don't think we are enough so—that we care about many things. So it's all the more of a compliment," she added, "that I should want to know so much about England."

The logic here seemed a little close; but Lord Lambeth, made conscious of a compliment, found his natural modesty just at hand. "I am sure you know a great deal more than I do."

"I really think I know a great deal—for a person who has never been there."

"Have you really never been there?" cried Lord Lambeth. "Fancy!"

"Never—except in imagination," said the young girl.

"Fancy!" repeated her companion. "But I daresay you'll go soon, won't you?"

"It's the dream of my life!" declared Bessie Alden, smiling.

"But your sister seems to know a tremendous lot about London," Lord Lambeth went on.

The young girl was silent a moment. "My sister and I are two very different persons," she presently said. "She has been a great deal in Europe. She has been in England several times. She has known a great many English people."

"But you must have known some, too," said Lord Lambeth.

"I don't think that I have ever spoken to one before. You are the first Englishman that—to my knowledge—I have ever talked with."

Bessie Alden made this statement with a certain gravity—almost, as it seemed to Lord Lambeth, an impressiveness. Attempts at impressiveness always made him feel awkward, and he now began to laugh and swing his stick. "Ah, you would have been sure to know!" he said. And then he added, after an instant—"I'm sorry I am not a better specimen."

The young girl looked away; but she smiled, laying aside her impressiveness. "You must remember that you are only a beginning," she said. Then she retraced her steps, leading the way back to the lawn, where they saw Mrs. Westgate come towards them with Percy Beaumont still at her side. "Perhaps I shall go to England next year," Miss Alden continued; "I want to, immensely. My sister is going to Europe, and she has asked me to go with her. If we go, I shall make her stay as long as possible in London."

"Ah, you must come in July," said Lord Lambeth. "That's the time when there is most going on."

"I don't think I can wait till July," the young girl rejoined. "By the first of May I shall be very impatient." They had gone further, and Mrs. Westgate and her companion were near them. "Kitty," said Miss Alden, "I have given out that we are going to London next May. So please to conduct yourself accordingly."

Percy Beaumont wore a somewhat animated—even a slightly irritated—air. He was by no means so handsome a man as his cousin, although in his cousin's absence he might have passed for a striking specimen of the tall, muscular, fair-bearded, clear-eyed Englishman. Just now Beaumont's clear eyes, which were small and of a pale grey colour, had a rather troubled light, and, after glancing at Bessie Alden while she spoke, he rested them upon his kinsman. Mrs. Westgate meanwhile, with her superfluously pretty gaze, looked at every one alike.

"You had better wait till the time comes," she said to her sister. "Perhaps next May you won't care so much about London. Mr. Beaumont and I," she went on, smiling at her companion, "have had a tremendous discussion. We don't agree about anything. It's perfectly delightful."

"Oh, I say, Percy!" exclaimed Lord Lambeth.

"I disagree," said Beaumont, stroking down his back hair, "even to the point of not thinking it delightful."

"Oh, I say!" cried Lord Lambeth again.

"I don't see anything delightful in my disagreeing with Mrs. Westgate," said Percy Beaumont.

"Well, I do!" Mrs. Westgate declared; and she turned to her sister. "You know you have to go to town. The phaeton is there. You had better take Lord Lambeth."

At this point Percy Beaumont certainly looked straight at his kinsman; he tried to catch his eye. But Lord Lambeth would not look at him; his own eyes were better occupied. "I shall be very happy,"

cried Bessie Alden. "I am only going to some shops. But I will drive you about and show you the place."

"An American woman who respects herself," said Mrs. Westgate, turning to Beaumont with her bright expository air, "must buy something every day of her life. If she cannot do it herself, she must send out some member of her family for the purpose. So Bessie goes forth to fulfil my mission."

The young girl had walked away, with Lord Lambeth by her side, to whom she was talking still; and Percy Beaumont watched them as they passed towards the house. "She fulfils her own mission," he presently said; "that of being a very attractive young lady."

"I don't know that I should say very attractive," Mrs. Westgate rejoined. "She is not so much that as she is charming when you really know her. She is very shy."

"Oh indeed?" said Percy Beaumont.

"Extremely shy," Mrs. Westgate repeated. "But she is a dear good girl; she is a charming species of girl. She is not in the least a flirt; that isn't at all her line; she doesn't know the alphabet of that sort of thing. She is very simple—very serious. She has lived a great deal in Boston, with another sister of mine—the eldest of us—who married a Bostonian. She is very cultivated, not at all like me—I am not in the least cultivated. She has studied immensely and read everything; she is what they call in Boston 'thoughtful.'"

"A rum sort of girl for Lambeth to get hold of!" his lordship's kinsman privately reflected.

"I really believe," Mrs. Westgate continued, "that the most charming girl in the world is a Boston superstructure upon a New York *fonds*; or perhaps a New York superstructure upon a Boston *fonds*. At any rate it's the mixture," said Mrs. Westgate, who continued to give Percy Beaumont a great deal of information.

Lord Lambeth got into a little basket-phaeton with Bessie Alden, and she drove him down the long avenue, whose extent he had measured on foot a couple of hours before, into the ancient town, as it was called in that part of the world, of Newport. The ancient town was a curious affair—a collection of fresh-looking little wooden houses, painted white, scattered over a hill-side and clustered about a long, straight street, paved with enormous cobble-stones. There were plenty of shops—a large proportion of which appeared to be those of fruit-vendors, with piles of huge water-melons and pumpkins stacked in front of them; and, drawn up before the shops, or bumping about on the cobble-stones, were innumerable other basket-phaetons freighted with ladies of high fashion, who greeted each other from vehicle to vehicle and conversed on the edge of the pavement in a manner that struck Lord Lambeth as demonstrative—with a great many "Oh, my dears," and little quick exclamations and caresses. His companion went into seventeen shops—he amused himself with counting them—and accumulated, at the bottom of the phaeton,

a pile of bundles that hardly left the young Englishman a place for his feet. As she had no groom nor footman, he sat in the phaeton to hold the ponies; where, although he was not a particularly acute observer, he saw much to entertain him—especially the ladies just mentioned, who wandered up and down with the appearance of a kind of aimless intentness, as if they were looking for something to buy, and who, tripping in and out of their vehicles, displayed remarkably pretty feet. It all seemed to Lord Lambeth very odd, and bright, and gay. Of course, before they got back to the villa, he had had a great deal of desultory conversation with Bessie Alden.

The young Englishmen spent the whole of that day and the whole of many successive days in what the French call the *intimité* of their new friends. They agreed that it was extremely jolly—that they had never known anything more agreeable. It is not proposed to narrate minutely the incidents of their sojourn on this charming shore; though if it were convenient I might present a record of impressions none the less delectable that they were not exhaustively analysed. Many of them still linger in the minds of our travellers, attended by a train of harmonious images—images of brilliant mornings on lawns and piazzas that overlooked the sea; of innumerable pretty girls; of infinite lounging and talking and laughing and flirting and lunching and dining; of universal friendliness and frankness; of occasions on which they knew everyone and everything and had an extraordinary sense of ease; of drives and rides in the late afternoon, over gleaming beaches, on long sea-roads, beneath a sky lighted up by marvellous sunsets; of suppers, on the return, informal, irregular, agreeable; of evenings at open windows or on the perpetual verandahs, in the summer starlight, above the warm Atlantic. The young Englishmen were introduced to everybody, entertained by everybody, intimate with everybody. At the end of three days they had removed their luggage from the hotel, and had gone to stay with Mrs. Westgate—a step to which Percy Beaumont at first offered some conscientious opposition. I call his opposition conscientious because it was founded upon some talk that he had had, on the second day, with Bessie Alden. He had indeed had a good deal of talk with her, for she was not literally always in conversation with Lord Lambeth. He had meditated upon Mrs. Westgate's account of her sister, and he discovered, for himself, that the young lady was clever and appeared to have read a great deal. She seemed very nice, though he could not make out that, as Mrs. Westgate had said, she was shy. If she was shy she carried it off very well.

"Mr. Beaumont," she had said, "please tell me something about Lord Lambeth's family. How would you say it in England?—his position."

"His position?" Percy Beaumont repeated.

"His rank—or whatever you call it. Unfortunately we haven't got a 'Peerage,' like the people in Thackeray."

"That's a great pity," said Beaumont. "You would find it all set forth there so much better than I can do it."

"He is a Peer, then?"

"Oh yes, he is a Peer."

"And has he any other title than Lord Lambeth?"

"His title is the Marquis of Lambeth," said Beaumont; and then he was silent; Bessie Alden appeared to be looking at him with interest. "He is the son of the Duke of Bayswater," he added, presently.

"The eldest son?"

"The only son."

"And are his parents living?"

"Oh yes; if his father were not living he would be a duke."

"So that when his father dies," pursued Bessie Alden, with more simplicity than might have been expected in a clever girl, "he will become Duke of Bayswater?"

"Of course," said Percy Beaumont. "But his father is in excellent health."

"And his mother?"

Beaumont smiled a little. "The Duchess is uncommonly robust."

"And has he any sisters?"

"Yes, there are two."

"And what are they called?"

"One of them is married. She is the Countess of Pimlico."

"And the other?"

"The other is unmarried; she is plain Lady Julia."

Bessie Alden looked at him a moment. "Is she very plain?"

Beaumont began to laugh again. "You would not find her so handsome as her brother," he said; and it was after this that he attempted to dissuade the heir of the Duke of Bayswater from accepting Mrs. Westgate's invitation. "Depend upon it," he said, "that girl means to try for you."

"It seems to me you are doing your best to make a fool of me," the modest young nobleman answered.

"She has been asking me," said Beaumont, "all about your people and your possessions."

"I am sure it is very good of her!" Lord Lambeth rejoined.

"Well, then," observed his companion, "if you go, you go with your eyes open."

"Damn my eyes!" exclaimed Lord Lambeth. "If one is to be a dozen times a day at the house, it is a great deal more convenient to sleep there. I am sick of travelling up and down this beastly Avenue."

Since he had determined to go, Percy Beaumont would of course have been very sorry to allow him to go alone; he was a man of conscience, and he remembered his promise to the Duchess. It was obviously the memory of this promise that made him say to his com-

panion a couple of days later, that he rather wondered he should be so fond of that girl.

"In the first place, how do you know how fond I am of her?" asked Lord Lambeth. "And in the second place why shouldn't I be fond of her?"

"I shouldn't think she would be in your line."

"What do you call my 'line?' You don't set her down as 'fast?'"

"Exactly so. Mrs. Westgate tells me that there is no such thing as the 'fast girl' in America; that it's an English invention, and that the term has no meaning here."

"All the better. It's an animal I detest."

"You prefer a blue-stocking."

"Is that what you call Miss Alden?"

"Her sister tells me," said Percy Beaumont, "that she is tremendously literary."

"I don't know anything about that. She is certainly very clever."

"Well," said Beaumont, "I should have supposed you would have found that sort of thing awfully slow."

"In point of fact," Lord Lambeth rejoined, "I find it uncommonly lively."

After this, Percy Beaumont held his tongue; but on August 10th he wrote to the Duchess of Bayswater. He was, as I have said, a man of conscience, and he had a strong, incorruptible sense of the proprieties of life. His kinsman, meanwhile, was having a great deal of talk with Bessie Alden—on the red sea-rocks beyond the lawn; in the course of long island rides, with a slow return in the glowing twilight; on the deep verandah, late in the evening. Lord Lambeth, who had stayed at many houses, had never stayed at a house in which it was possible for a young man to converse so frequently with a young lady. This young lady no longer applied to Percy Beaumont for information concerning his lordship. She addressed herself directly to the young nobleman. She asked him a great many questions, some of which bored him a little; for he took no pleasure in talking about himself.

"Lord Lambeth," said Bessie Alden, "are you an hereditary legislator?"

"Oh, I say," cried Lord Lambeth, "don't make me call myself such names as that."

"But you are a member of Parliament," said the young girl.

"I don't like the sound of that, either."

"Doesn't your father sit in the House of Lords?" Bessie Alden went on.

"Very seldom," said Lord Lambeth.

"Is it an important position?" she asked.

"Oh dear no," said Lord Lambeth.

"I should think it would be very grand," said Bessie Alden, "to possess, simply by an accident of birth, the right to make laws for a great nation."

"Ah, but one doesn't make laws. It's a great humbug."

"I don't believe that," the young girl declared. "It must be a great privilege, and I should think that if one thought of it in the right way—from a high point of view—it would be very inspiring."

"The less one thinks of it the better," Lord Lambeth affirmed.

"I think it's tremendous," said Bessie Alden; and on another occasion she asked him if he had any tenantry. Hereupon it was that, as I have said, he was a little bored.

"Do you want to buy up their leases?" he asked.

"Well—have you got any livings?" she demanded.

"Oh, I say!" he cried. "Have you got a clergyman that is looking out?" But she made him tell her that he had a Castle; he confessed to but one. It was the place in which he had been born and brought up, and, as he had an old-time liking for it, he was beguiled into describing it a little and saying it was really very jolly. Bessie Alden listened with great interest, and declared that she would give the world to see such a place. Whereupon—"It would be awfully kind of you to come and stay there," said Lord Lambeth. He took a vague satisfaction in the circumstance that Percy Beaumont had not heard him make the remark I have just recorded.

Mr. Westgate, all this time, had not, as they said at Newport, "come on." His wife more than once announced that she expected him on the morrow; but on the morrow she wandered about a little, with a telegram in her jewelled fingers, declaring it was very tiresome that his business detained him in New York; that he could only hope the Englishmen were having a good time. "I must say," said Mrs. Westgate, "that it is no thanks to him if you are!" And she went on to explain, while she continued that slow-paced promenade which enabled her well-adjusted skirts to display themselves so advantageously, that unfortunately in America there was no leisure-class. It was Lord Lambeth's theory, freely propounded when the young men were together, that Percy Beaumont was having a very good time with Mrs. Westgate, and that under the pretext of meeting for the purpose of animated discussion, they were indulging in practices that imparted a shade of hypocrisy to the lady's regret for her husband's absence.

"I assure you we are always discussing and differing," said Percy Beaumont. "She is awfully argumentative. American ladies certainly don't mind contradicting you. Upon my word I don't think I was ever treated so by a woman before. She's so devilish positive."

Mrs. Westgate's positive quality, however, evidently had its attractions; for Beaumont was constantly at his hostess's side. He detached himself one day to the extent of going to New York to talk over the Tennessee Central with Mr. Westgate; but he was absent only forty-eight hours, during which, with Mr. Westgate's assistance, he completely settled this piece of business. "They certainly do things quickly in New York," he observed to his cousin; and he added that Mr. West-

gate had seemed very uneasy lest his wife should miss her visitor—he had been in such an awful hurry to send him back to her. "I'm afraid you'll never come up to an American husband—if that's what the wives expect," he said to Lord Lambeth.

Mrs. Westgate, however, was not to enjoy much longer the entertainment with which an indulgent husband had desired to keep her provided. On August 21st Lord Lambeth received a telegram from his mother, requesting him to return immediately to England; his father had been taken ill, and it was his filial duty to come to him.

The young Englishman was visibly annoyed. "What the deuce does it mean?" he asked of his kinsman. "What am I to do?"

Percy Beaumont was annoyed as well; he had deemed it his duty, as I have narrated, to write to the Duchess, but he had not expected that this distinguished woman would act so promptly upon his hint. "It means," he said, "that your father is laid up. I don't suppose it's anything serious; but you have no option. Take the first steamer; but don't be alarmed."

Lord Lambeth made his farewells; but the few last words that he exchanged with Bessie Alden are the only ones that have a place in our record. "Of course I needn't assure you," he said, "that if you should come to England next year, I expect to be the first person that you inform of it."

Bessie Alden looked at him a little and she smiled. "Oh, if we come to London," she answered, "I should think you would hear of it."

Percy Beaumont returned with his cousin, and his sense of duty compelled him, one windless afternoon, in mid-Atlantic, to say to Lord Lambeth that he suspected that the Duchess's telegram was in part the result of something he himself had written to her. "I wrote to her—as I explicitly notified you I had promised to do—that you were extremely interested in a little American girl."

Lord Lambeth was extremely angry, and he indulged for some moments in the simple language of indignation. But I have said that he was a reasonable young man, and I can give no better proof of it than the fact that he remarked to his companion at the end of half an hour—"You were quite right after all. I am very much interested in her. Only, to be fair," he added, "you should have told my mother also that she is not—seriously—interested in me."

Percy Beaumont gave a little laugh. "There is nothing so charming as modesty in a young man in your position. That speech is a capital proof that you are sweet on her."

"She is not interested—she is not!" Lord Lambeth repeated.

"My dear fellow," said his companion, "you are very far gone."

HENRY JAMES, JUN.

The Sun's Long Streamers.

Professor Cleveland Abbe, an American astronomer and meteorologist, who had intended to observe the eclipse of the sun last July from the summit of Pike's Peak, in Colorado, more than 14,000 feet above the sea-level, fell ill after he had reached that place, and was carried down to the Lake House (elevation 10,000 feet), there to remain while the rest of his party stayed to view the eclipse from the summit. Probably if he had remained with them his observations would have differed in no very marked degree from those which other astronomers made on that occasion. He would have devoted a few seconds, perhaps, to the study of the sun's corona with the naked eye. He would probably have made some telescopic, spectroscopic, or polariscopic observations during the rest of the three minutes during which the total eclipse lasted, and possibly he might have noted some feature rather more effectively and satisfactorily than most of the other observers. But under the actual circumstances he could not hope thus to take his place among the thousands of observers who have noted the phenomena of total solar eclipses. He had no optical or other instrument. Worse than all, he is near-sighted; and though he had a pair of spectacles, it was not quite strong enough to correct his near-sightedness.

Yet Professor Abbe succeeded in making observations far exceeding in interest any which were made by the entire force of eclipse observers in 1874 and 1875, and fairly comparable in this respect with the most remarkable discoveries effected during the great eclipses of 1868, 1869, 1870, and 1871. Debarred from instrumental researches, unable to do what most observers of eclipses seem anxious to do—namely, to see everything that can be seen—he was compelled to restrict himself to precisely that line of observation which we indicated eight years ago as likely to be most instructive. He gave his whole attention to the corona, and especially to its outlying and feebler portions. Studying the phenomena with the naked eye, or at least with only spectacles to aid him, he could recognise faint luminosity which the telescope would inevitably have concealed from his view. He was not hurried; nor was he disturbed by the thought that such and such instruments must be attended to in turn while still totality lasted, with care also that in the darkness nothing should be disturbed or injured. As he said after the observations were completed, and as we pointed out in 1870, "a glance of a few seconds will no more suffice to do justice to the delicate phenomena [of the corona] than it would suffice to enable a naturalist to draw

the distinguishing features of a new shell or insect, or would enable an artist to correctly sketch in a landscape."

Before describing what Professor Abbe actually saw, it may be well to indicate first the nature of the observations he proposed to make, and secondly his preconceived ideas as to what he was likely to see, for otherwise the value of his observations will not be fully appreciated.

Our readers may perhaps remember that in the year 1870 a discussion took place on the question whether the glory of light seen around the sun during total eclipse belongs to the sun or not. There were those who maintained very confidently the opinion that this glory is either a purely optical phenomenon only or else is due to the passage of the solar rays through our own atmosphere all round the place of the eclipsed sun. On the other hand, there were some (ourselves among the number) who pointed out that the corona must necessarily belong to the sun, since its features could not possibly be reconciled with any other theory. The greater number of astronomers seemed, however, to form no opinion one way or the other, but to prefer to leave the matter to be decided by fresh evidence. For too many imagine that the best way of showing how greatly they value observations is by declining to investigate the full significance of observations already made.

It will be remembered that before long the new observations devised to settle a question which had been abundantly answered by observations already made proved unmistakably the solar nature of the corona. Photographs were taken during the total eclipse of December 1870, and in greater number during that of December 1871. On the latter occasion photographic views of the corona taken at stations far apart agreed closely together, showing that the corona could not possibly be an atmospheric phenomenon. No one could imagine that the air above Baicull, where Mr. Davis (Lord Lindsay's photographer) took his views, could by some amazing accident produce coronal features resembling those produced by the air above Ootacamund, one station being close to the sea-shore, the other hundreds of miles inland and some 10,000 feet above the sea-level. On the other hand, the resemblance of the several views taken at either station showed that the coronal glory could not be due to the illumination of some matter on the hither side of the moon, but far outside our own atmosphere. For the solar rays, passing athwart the lunar disc to fall upon such matter, would shift rapidly in position as the moon moved onwards, so that the features seen at the beginning of total eclipse would differ markedly from those seen towards the end. Since the six pictures taken at Baicull closely resembled each other, as did the six taken at Ootacamund, so that all twelve views represented the same corona (though of course not all to the same distance from the sun), it was manifest that the corona then seen was a solar appendage. The actual distance to which the corona can be traced in these pictures corresponds to about 900,000 miles.

But the believers in an atmospheric corona were not even yet wholly

satisfied. Nay, before the recent total eclipse one among them even went so far as to say that the observations and photographs of 1870 and 1871, while demonstrating the solar nature of the glory immediately surrounding the sun, proved the long rays extending much farther from the sun to be non-solar phenomena. "The non-solar origin of the radial structure," said Mr. Lockyer as late as July 20 last, "was conclusively established" during the eclipse of December 1871.

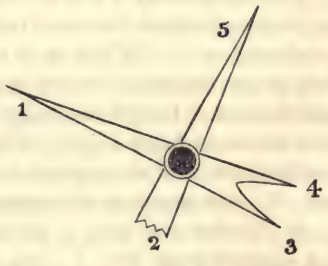
To say the truth, there is no possible way of interpreting the long rays as phenomena of our own atmosphere or of matter (gaseous, meteoric, or dust-like) on the hither side of the moon. The idea is one which mathematicians may casually have thrown out. Indeed, Mädler and Airy, after the eclipse of 1860, advanced the hypothesis that the long rays belong to matter between us and the moon, while Sir John Herschel adopted in his *Familiar Lectures* the notion that these rays belong to matter at a great height in our own atmosphere. But it would be to misrepresent these eminent astronomers to assert that they ever *maintained* these views. The available evidence, analysed as any one of these mathematicians could have analysed it, had he seen fit, would have shown convincingly that the rays must come from matter lying far beyond the moon. Sir John Herschel admitted this in a letter addressed to the present writer. Whether Airy or Mädler ever examined the evidence closely we do not know. If they did they doubtless were led to the same result as Sir J. Herschel. The matter may be put in this way:—Since these long rays extend from the black disc of the moon during mid-totality, they occupy then a part of the sky where no sun-illuminated air lies at such a time; therefore they cannot belong to our air: but if there were some very tenuous matter, aërial or dust-like, extending as far as the moon's orbit, the whole region of the sky athwart which these rays extend would contain matter of this sort under full solar illumination; no rays then would be seen, but a nearly uniform glare, which should become brighter and brighter as the distance from the sun's place increased. If we add to this that at midnight the whole of the sky, except a round spot some four or five times the diameter of the moon, would be occupied by this cis-lunar matter under direct solar illumination, instead of that illumination from behind which such matter would receive during total eclipse, we see that the darkness of our midnight sky speaks as decisively against this theory as does the brightness of the long rays seen during total eclipse.

Notwithstanding the overwhelming evidence available to show that these rays lie far beyond the moon, Professor Abbe had adopted the opinion that the rays belong to the earth's atmosphere, or else are mere optical illusions. "I had hitherto firmly believed them," he says, "to be either in the earth's atmosphere or in the observer's eyes." "Such rays," he adds, "were seen by members of my eclipse party at Sioux Falls City, Dakota, August 1869; but at that time and ever since I have doubted their existence." It is manifest that he did not begin his

observations with the preconceived idea that the rays belong to matter far more distant than the moon, but with a strong opinion, if not a strong prejudice, the other way.

Next let us consider the actual circumstances under which he observed the eclipse, for they also are important in enabling us to estimate the value of his result. "Having been somewhat hastily carried," he says, "from the summit of Pike's Peak down to the Lake House (elevation 10,000 feet), I had by Monday noon recovered sufficiently to be laid on the ground upon a gentle slope facing westwards, where I studied the rays visible about the sun during totality. I had no optical or other instrument, and unfortunately had only a pair of spectacles not quite sufficient even to correct my near-sightedness. By straining my eyes somewhat I was, however, able to do something. My whole attention was given to the rays that extended beyond the brilliant ring which I presume represents the true solar atmosphere. I was undisturbed by any other consideration except to get a true presentation of these rays. . . . I went over the region around the sun again and again—at least six times—leisurely during the 161 seconds of totality, and cannot doubt the truthfulness and fairness of my drawing and description. . . . Two stakes were driven down on either side of me; and between them was placed a rotable axis, on which my drawing-board and paper were fastened. . . . By slightly tipping my drawing-board I kept the sun just above it, or just hidden from view, as I wished, while I drew in such details as I wished, and that too, as it seemed to me at the time, with great ease and accuracy, especially as to the angular position of the rays."

The moon or sun appeared surrounded by a narrow brilliant white ring, less than 140,000 miles broad. (We alter the technical indication of apparent breadth into the actual breadth in miles as likely to be more intelligible to most of our readers.) This ring was as brilliant as the full moon. It was of uniform tint and light, continuous and without any break or structure visible to Professor Abbe. "Outside of this there was no other concentric coronal appearance and no external boundary; but the immaculate blue black sky immediately adjoined this light, which I now call the true solar corona or atmosphere." There was throughout plenty of light to read and write by, though very different from that given by the full moon.



Illustrating the rays seen round the eclipsed sun by Professor Abbe.

The picture which accompanies Professor Abbe's description in the *Colorado Springs Daily Gazette* is doubtless not intended to present with any accuracy the actual tints or degrees of brightness of the various features observed. The shape of the streamers is shown with sufficient exactness in the accompanying figure. It will be

understood, of course, that the rays numbered were seen on a dark background, the "immaculate blue" of Abbe's description.

The tapering ray marked No. 1 was the first seen by him. He says he saw it on his first glance at the corona. It then seemed to extend about three times the diameter of the sun; but in a minute or so, as the observer's eyes became accustomed to the sight, he was able to trace its tapering end to a distance of six diameters of the sun's disc. "Its sides were straight lines, its axis passing slightly below the sun's centre. Its light was an exceedingly faint and delicate white, apparently overlaid or intermingled with the blue of the atmosphere. I saw no striation, texture, or variation of light. There was no decided increase of brightness in that part of the ray near the sun's edge, nor in the axis of the beam, the delicate light continuing uniform up to the corona, in whose glare it was lost." We must note here two points. In all probability the words "in a minute or so" are used in their colloquial sense for *presently*, because the whole totality did not last two minutes and half, and in the course of that time Professor Abbe noted all the features of the corona six several times. Secondly, we find that both in the *Daily News* and in *Nature* Professor Abbe is described as tracing the rays to a distance of six degrees from the eclipsed sun, not six diameters only; so that, as the sun's apparent diameter is little more than half a degree, these accounts would suggest that he saw the rays to double the distance described in the *Colorado Daily Gazette*. But there seems little reason to doubt that the accounts given in the *Daily News* and *Nature*, which constitute in reality but one account, seeing that they both came from the same source, are incorrect; for the account sent to the Colorado paper was written by Professor Abbe himself. It contains an illustration from a drawing of his own (reproduced above), which agrees with his description. Moreover, we received the paper directly from Professor Abbe; and unquestionably he would have struck out the word "diameters" and substituted "degrees" if he had really seen the ray extending to the greater distance. Note also that the word "diameter" is used throughout the descriptions of other rays.

The ray marked 2 was seen as soon as 1. Its bounding edges, diverging from each other, but not from the sun's centre, produced a somewhat fan-shaped ray. "When first seen," says Abbe, "I estimated its outer limit at one diameter, but subsequently traced it to a diameter and a half from the sun. Its left-hand edge appeared somewhat sharper and brighter than the right-hand edge. With this exception the light was very uniformly distributed throughout its surface, fading away rapidly at its outer end. It also remained changeless throughout the totality."

No. 3 was also seen at the same time as No. 1. "It was narrower and shorter than No. 1: its estimated length, three diameters. It broadened at its base, like No. 1, and had the same uniform tint and intensity."

No. 4 "was not noticed at all until the totality was half over. Its

length was one diameter, and it was certainly brighter at the end farthest from the sun. It remained perfectly steady," adds Professor Abbe, "after I once noticed it, and gradually I became aware of a faint light partially connecting it with No. 3, so that the final impression left on me was that these two constituted one fan-shaped projection similar to No. 2, but fading out in the central portions. The axis of No. 1 and of Nos. 3 and 4 passed nearly, if not exactly, through the sun's centre."

No. 5 extended fully five diameters from the sun's limb, "and was in all respects similar to No. 1. Its base was broader than that of No. 1, which I attributed," says Abbe, "to the glare of the increasing corona" and of a mound of the ruddy prominence matter (low-lying, so as to form only an extension of the sierra). The light of No. 5 was fainter, Professor Abbe thought, than that of No. 1. "Its edges were straight, except in so far as the coronal glare appeared to unduly broaden the base. Its axis passed very nearly through the sun's centre, and was in the prolongation of the axis of No. 2."

Professor Abbe's explanation of these rays or streamers occurred to him an hour or so after seeing them. He advances it as one which "will probably result in the overthrow of all previously entertained theories respecting the character and cause of these streams of light." But in reality it is not nearly so novel as he seems to imagine. It is, indeed, partly new, and in our opinion it is in great part true; but what is true in it is not new, and we question greatly whether what is new in it can possibly be true. Let astronomers judge.

"Meteor streams," says Professor Abbe, "is the key to the solution—not such meteors as some suppose to be falling into the sun daily, but the grand streams of meteors that cause the numerous shooting stars of August and November, and of the existence of which there is indubitable proof. These streams consist of fine particles or pieces, each a long way from its neighbour, but all rushing along in parallel orbits about the sun, like the falling drops of rain in a thunder-shower. The August stream is calculated to be several hundred thousand miles broad and thick, and many million miles long. Such a stream, when far beyond the sun, but still lighted up by it, would reflect to us a faint uniform light precisely like that of these rays. If one end of the stream were farther from us than the other, the effect of the perspective would be to produce a tapering or wedge-shaped appearance. In some other part of our orbit, or with the meteor stream in some other part of its orbit, the perspective might vanish and the two ends appear of the same width. In this way we shall undoubtedly be able to explain the very numerous historical and memorable occasions on which flaming coronas, swords, comets, &c., seen in the sky during a total eclipse have been regarded by the superstitious as Divine omens."

We have very little doubt that the great extension of the corona in certain directions during many total eclipses, and the probably far greater extension of a fainter, not readily discerned lustre during all eclipses, is

due to the existence of meteor streams. It is also undoubtedly true that several of the meteor systems encountered by our earth in her journey round the sun have the vast dimensions mentioned by Professor Abbe. Indeed, he far underrates the dimensions of the August and November meteor systems, each of which must be measured in length by hundreds of millions of miles, not by mere millions. But it is absolutely impossible that any of the meteor systems traversed by our earth, or any meteor systems of no greater degree of richness, should present the appearance of streamers surrounding the sun, like those in our figure above. So far as the two systems specially mentioned by Professor Abbe are concerned, inasmuch as we know the exact shape and position of the orbits along which the meteors forming these systems travel, we can determine the exact position which the meteoric streams occupy in the heavens at any moment; and most certainly neither of them on July 29 last occupied the position of the two beams shown across the sun in our figure. The August system was the one which at the time passed nearest to the sun's place on the sky, but it did not come within several degrees of the sun. The November system did not even cross the part of the sky where the sun was. These two systems, therefore, could not possibly be connected in any way with the two streams, of whatever nature, which produced the rays intersecting exactly at the sun.

But there is a more general objection to the theory that such meteor systems may explain coronal streamers seen during total eclipses of the sun. If such streams could be seen when situated beyond the sun, they would be seen far better when opposite the sun on the dark background of the midnight sky. Take, for instance, the November meteors. We know that the flight of meteors, some 2,000 millions of miles long, which the earth traversed in November 1866, 1867, 1868, 1869, 1870, and 1871, is now nearing the remotest part of the long orbit of the November system, many millions of miles beyond the path of Uranus. We know that at midnight in winter the richest part of that system lies due south, at an elevation varying from thirty to fifty degrees above the horizon. There, illuminated fully by the sun, though at a great distance from him, it ought to be far better seen than a similar system lying beyond the sun and visible only through the light of the brightest part of the corona. But no one has ever, on the darkest and clearest night and under the most favourable atmospheric conditions, even suspected the existence of the faintest possible light where the heart of the November system is really situated. Much less, then, could such a system be seen during total eclipse (if so situated as to lie athwart the sun). Systems less rich than the November system (the richest known to us) would have still less chance of being discerned.

If, then, we are to account for the radial streamers seen by Professor Abbe, and also seen during many other total eclipses, though to a less distance, by the meteoric theory, we must consider meteor systems very

unlike those through which the earth herself passes. The meteor systems required by the theory must be much denser and much more brightly illuminated than the August and November systems. To say they must be much more brightly illuminated is equivalent to saying that they must be much nearer the sun. And in this we see an escape from another difficulty. Meteor systems very near the sun would be far more likely to appear as streamers extending radially from him than systems at a great distance from him. A distant system might, by a mere chance, so appear. For instance, if a total eclipse of the sun had occurred on or about May 10, 1865, the November meteor-system (whose richest part was then crossing the earth's track at the point she occupies on November 13) would have appeared, if discernible at all, as a streak athwart the sun's place in the sky, and therefore forming two rays on opposite sides of him, somewhat like 2 and 5 in our figure. Sixteen years or so earlier or later the November system would present a similar appearance, only very much fainter, on account of greatly increased distance, during a total eclipse occurring on or about November 13. At no other time in the year except November 13 and May 10, or about these dates, could the November system present such an appearance. But a system travelling close to the sun, and not far from the plane near which all the planets travel, would present at all times nearly the appearance of a pair of rays like 2 and 5 of our figure. On this account, therefore, as well as on account of the greater brightness with which such meteor systems would be illuminated, we must prefer the theory that the systems to which the coronal rays are due travel near to the sun.

Yet, even as thus presented, the meteor theory alone seems inadequate to explain the coronal streamers. There is an enormous mass of evidence showing that meteor systems are most richly strewn throughout a region around the sun, extending nearly to the distance of the planet Mercury; but there is also abundant reason for believing that these multitudinous systems would present an appearance very different from that depicted in Professor Abbe's view of the coronal streamers. We want something quite distinct from the theory of a mere aggregation of meteors to account for these rays, whether pointed or fan-shaped, extending directly from the sun. The aggregation of meteors might present the appearance of a luminous cloud around the place of the eclipsed sun. This cloud might be to some degree radiated, because each meteor system would have a course carrying it either directly athwart the sun's place on the sky, or nearly so. But there would be nothing like those sharply-defined streamers extending separately from the sun to distances of ten or twelve sun-breadths. Sir George Airy, describing the appearance of the corona during the eclipse of 1851, pictures just such a cloud as we should expect to result from the aggregation of meteors. "Its colour," he said, "was white, or resembling that of Venus; there was no flickering or unsteadiness; it was not separated from the moon, nor had it any annular structure: it looked like a radiated luminous cloud

behind the moon." The long streamers manifestly require a different explanation.

We cannot but think that the true explanation of these streamers, whatever it may be (we are not in the least prepared to say what it is), will be found whensoever astronomers have found an explanation of comets' tails. These singular appendages, like the streamers seen by Professor Abbe, extend directly from the sun, as if he exerted some repellent action on the matter forming the heads of comets. Indeed, Sir John Herschel did not hesitate to say that the existence of such a repulsive force was, to all intents and purposes, demonstrated by the phenomena of comets' tails. Now we know that meteors and comets are in some way associated, though the actual nature of the connection between them is not clear. It is certain that the November meteors, the August meteors, and other such systems, follow in the track of known comets. We know that when, in 1862, the earth passed through the region of space along which Biela's comet had recently travelled, there was a display of thousands of meteors, all radiating from just that part of the heavens from which bodies travelling parallel to the orbit of Biela's comet would have seemed to radiate. It follows from this association between comets and meteors, and from the fact that probably thousands of meteoric and cometic systems travel close to the sun, that in all probability there must exist generally, if not always, in the sun's neighbourhood, enormous quantities of the substance whence comets' tails are formed by the sun's repellent action. This being so, we should expect to find generally, if not always, long streams of matter extending from the sun's immediate neighbourhood, in the same way that comets' tails extend from comets' heads. Whether the repulsive force is electrical, magnetic, or otherwise, does not at present concern us; or rather it does concern us, but at present we are quite unable to answer the question. All that we know certainly is that, in the first place, the sun does in some way cause streams of luminous matter to appear beyond the heads of comets, in a direction opposite to his own, and to enormous distances; and, in the second place, that the matter forming comets' heads is probably present at all times, in large quantities, in the sun's immediate neighbourhood. We can hence infer, with extreme probability, that such long streamers as Abbe saw last July, Myer in August 1869, Feilitzsch in June 1860, and several Swedish observers during the eclipse of 1733, are produced in the same way as comets' tails, and therefore really extend (as they seem to do) radially from the sun. It is also certain that if they did not really extend radially from the sun, their always seeming to do so would be altogether inexplicable. So that the theory to which we are led in one direction leads us also out of what would else be a very perplexing difficulty in another direction.

Three Burmese Heroines.

EVERY visitor to Burma has seen a native play, or, at least, has heard the outcome of its orchestra. A night or two after his arrival at Rangoon he is strolling back from his club or mess, when a noise of tangled music comes in occasional wafts from Kemendine or Ahlōn. On his reaching home the sound steals in with more precision and cadence through the open jilmils of the room, and he can even make out an intermittent murmur, which seems like laughter and loud applause. When he wakes at early dawn the music and murmur are still continuing, and his Madrassee boy will tell him, with sleepy eyes, what happened last night at the Burmese "pwê." Or cooped in a native boat, bamboo-floored and bamboo-thatched, he has been creeping up the winding channel of the Sittoung, on his way to the distant frontier station. He has escaped the perils of the Kayasu creek, and all the weary afternoon has had nothing to do but watch the crumbling banks as they slowly pass on either side, or his four boatmen cheerful and incessant, poling sturdily on against the stream. Toward sunset they moor him off a narrow spit of sand, and after a bath in the muddy water, disappear in the direction of the clump of mango and tamarind trees which screen the hamlet where they expect their supper. An hour later the moon has clambered nearly overhead, and once again our traveller hears a quaint discord of drum and cymbal and flageolet. This time, no doubt, he determines to explore, and, ascending the bank, soon finds himself in the middle of the village with all the inhabitants, men, women and children, grouped in a circle at some little distance. In the centre is what seems to him like a plantain-tree, with wood-oil torches flaring round the base. To the east are seated the orchestra and those members of the company who, for the moment, are not "on the boards." The ladies with the help of hand mirrors are arranging their hair or powdering their faces, while the gentlemen are probably asleep. An open space around the tree, about ten feet deep, is the actual proscenium, the only limits being the ring of spectators, who are all of them sitting on the ground. At present the overture is going on, and there is leisure to observe the instruments at work. The most important is evidently a series of drums, suspended around a circular wooden frame nearly three feet high and four feet across. The operator sits inside and plays almost as one would on a piano. There are, besides, one or two flageolets of wretched tone and construction, a pair of cymbals, and some bamboo clappers of very simple manufacture, which are mostly used to mark the time. However, at present, like the rest of the band, they are making a

tremendous din. Faster and faster grow the beats, and louder the uproar. It is the signal for the king's appearance—the imposing prelude to every Burman play.

The first thing that will strike the visitor is the utter absence of all theatrical adjuncts. There is no curtain but a dingy wrapper which is used to screen the heroine during a single episode in the piece; there is no scenery but the plantain-tree, and no stage property but a wooden chair. Nor has the costume any compensating effects. There are barely enough tinsel and trappings to distinguish the king from the clown; the "minthami" (princess) from the maid of honour. A youth with a yellow kerchief around his head, a white linen jacket, a silk waistcloth, and a curved stick in his hand to represent a bow, gets up from the ground where he has been squatting, and advances into the ring with slow and stately gait, and a curious waving of his arm and hand. He is a very prince for the nonce, both to himself and to the villagers around. (They all know he is only "ko hpyu, or ko maï," that the middle-aged woman he woos with regal compliments is not the daughter of the monarch of Wethali, but a strolling player from Yemethen. There is absolutely nothing external to help the illusion.) The plot is slovenly, disjointed, and obscure; the main incidents and characters are common to every native drama. And yet they will listen to the lad with serious, almost reverential attention, while he declaims in ornate language about his ancestry, his attributes, and his exploits; they will encourage him in his courtship, sympathise with the afflicted pair during their separation, and, after sitting the whole night through, will yet at early dawn be open-eyed and eager to applaud the happy *dénouement*. The traveller will find the above by no means a solitary instance. At several halting places on his route the boatmen, after all their hard day's work, will sit up half the night at a rustic play. Fifty years ago every considerable village had a troupe of actors who performed at all the popular junketings. In these days of free intercommunication their place is very largely taken by strolling companies from Upper Burma, who come down after the rains are fairly ended, and return at the close of the hot season. They penetrate everywhere in their rambles, and it is rare indeed that even the most secluded villager does not witness a "zât" or puppet-show twice or thrice in the year. . . . This passion for histrionics is, perhaps, the most striking trait of the national character. It is genuine and simple enough of its kind, and, in a great measure, results from a true dramatic instinct. A Burman playgoer admires a clear flexible voice infinitely more than a pretty face, and graceful style and action more than a shapely form. Youth and beauty are quite minor recommendations. The prima donna, "Yendaw ma hay," who at present reigns supreme in Upper and Lower Burma, is a lady about forty-five. The king sent her down to perform at Rangoon on the Imperial Proclamation day, when I had the honour of an introduction. She could never have been pretty, even according to Burmese ideas, and yet she

was courted by powerful nobles, and finally married a veritable prince. Her attractions are best described by the vernacular word "yinthi," of which "elegant" is the nearest English equivalent. Of course, to a stranger her voice, attitude, and gesture, were more or less uncomely and extravagant. One can relish the easy laughter-moving by-play of the clown (an invariable character in a Burmese drama), and now and again, in the long recitativo of the heroine, one can catch a few bars of the refrain which somewhat correspond with western notions of harmony and method. But, on the whole, it requires as much education of taste to appreciate native acting as it does to enjoy the flavour of those other provincial specialities, the dorian fruit and "ngapee."

There are, of course, abundance of other amusements in a country of sturdy peasant proprietors, where there exist none of the usual Oriental trammels of caste, and class, and creed. The rudiments of boxing, wrestling, football, hockey, and boat-racing have long been familiar to every Burman, and to English visitors this athleticism contrasts delightfully with the flaccid apathy of Lower Bengal. But a play or puppet-show is, no doubt, the chief recreation of prince and peasant, partly from intellectual tendencies, and partly from the religious sanction which such entertainments are supposed to possess. The national "zât," as the name implies, is theoretically a representation of one of the 550 existences (jâtakas) of Gautama. It corresponds, therefore, more or less exactly, with a mystery or miracle play of the Middle Ages. Nowadays, though a native dramatist does not confine himself to scripture history, he is always lavish with "Tipitaka" allusions, and as his auditory obtain "merit" from the mere act of listening to the sacred word, the religious element is still to some extent conserved. The hero is generally a prince of one of the kingdoms of the "masshima Desa," or great central region of Northern India. He obtains leave of absence from his father, and proceeds to make the grand tour of the period, which consisted in an uncomfortable pilgrimage through some demon-haunted jungle. Here he has a variety of adventures, and, among other things, encounters a casual princess, whom he courts and marries in approved Burman fashion. The rest of the story is occupied with the trials and vicissitudes of the pair, who always, however, become king and queen somewhere before the end of the piece. With slight variation, this outline would stand as the plot of half the dramas performed in the country.

But the trio of ladies whom I have chosen to commemorate are not, as I hope, the idle figments of Oriental romance, but real flesh-and-blood heroines, who lived and loved in dim old days, amid a dim old people, of whose history the world even now has very little knowledge or record. There is nothing especially remarkable about their story. The charm and tenderness of each episode is mostly derived from its sudden contrast with the wars, and triumphs, and slaughters which are chronicled around it. This idyllic flavour is lost, of course, when the scenes are detached from their picturesque setting and surroundings. The Burmese

playwright who originally made their names familiar to his countrymen, found their lives enshrined in the pages of his national history, the *Mahārāzawen* Sir Arthur Phayre, I believe, was the first to give Orientalists some idea of this marvellous chronicle, which traces the lineage of an Indo-Chinese dynasty up to Mahā Thamata, the first elective monarch of mankind. There are several awkward breaks, no doubt, in the succession, and little credibility can be placed in what is exclusively a palace record. Yet a Burman believes as fervently in the glories of Dwattaboung and Anaurahta as an Englishman in King Alfred or Queen Elizabeth, and much of his extravagant reverence for royalty is owing to the glamour and glory with which tradition still surrounds the white umbrella and the throne.

In one respect, at least, the *Rāzawen* is genuine enough. It contains the purest Burmese a student can hope to find, and it is written throughout with a clearness, vigour, and simplicity, which remind you more of Herodotus than an Eastern historian. The edition I have made use of is the latest one produced. It was compiled about forty-five years ago, under the patronage and direction of King Bhāgyeedau, in the Hman Nan chamber of the palace, whence it got the name of the "Hman Nan," or "Crystal Palace" version. It is difficult to speak too highly of the skill, discretion, and industry with which the revising committee accomplished their task. They collated all the existing MSS., besides comparing them with stone inscriptions, ancient ballads, and monastery records, a vast store of which were accumulated by the royal order. They were thus able to correct or verify several important dates, and introduce some uniformity into several conflicting legends. Furthermore, they have not hesitated to omit the most absurd and exaggerated of mediæval myths, and from their matter-of-fact comments and criticism, have lent a singular air of verisimilitude to the whole chronicle. It is from this source the present narrative has been obtained, and in many parts I have done little more than translate the original word for word from the Burmese.

The first great Burmese kingdom was at Tagoung, or Upper Pugan. This double city, the ruins of which still exist but have never been properly explored, was colonised by a Solar Prince of Gautama's family, who immigrated from Northern India. He had thirty-two successors, the last of whom was expelled by a Tartar invasion. Just at this time, however, a fresh Prince of the same dynasty arrived from India with his followers. He espoused the queen of his predecessor and re-established the Tagoung kingdom. The sixteenth monarch in descent from him was Maharaja Menggyee, the last of the line, whose reign commenced about the year 490 B.C. Shortly after his accession he sent his brother-in-law the Crown Prince to slay a mighty boar which was devastating all the country. The huntsman, after a lengthy and laborious chase, slew his quarry on an island near Prome, which is known even now as "Wek-hto-chyun," "the island where the boar was pierced." The Prince then considered he was a great way off from his country, and

if he returned without the spoil the king would not believe in his exploit. And even if his valour were recognised he would enjoy but a transitory renown. His prime of life had passed, and it was best to provide for future welfare. So he became a recluse and wore the yellow robe. And it chanced one day that a doe whose haunts were near his cave left on the ground a little female child. The hermit adopted it, suckling it from the tips of his fore and middle fingers, and gave it the name of "Bhedari," from its having been found in a cleft of the rock. As the years went on the girl grew beautiful exceedingly, and was endowed with the five graces of women. And the old man thought, "It is not fit that others should see her with me;" and each morning he bade her take a gourd and fill it at the stream which ran through the forest. But the gourd had just one tiny hole through which the water could barely trickle, and it was only at nightfall that the maiden could return. Meantime the queen-mother at Tagoung had given birth to two blind sons. The king was greatly angered at this, and ordered that both should be destroyed. But the queen kept them for some years in secret, and finally sent them floating down the river which flowed past the royal city. On their arrival at Sagaing an ogress came on board whom the lads compelled by force to remove their blindness. They then resumed their journey down the stream till they saw a flock of cranes cross the river overhead. Landing at the spot where the birds had disappeared, the elder brother noticed the footprints of a woman on the sand, and followed them till he came to where Bhedari was sitting with the gourd. The lad wondered at her beauty and her dress, for the "Nats" (devas) had clothed her with shining apparel. But when he saw what she was doing he drew a little nearer, and said, "Lady, there is no hole in the gourd." So taking it up, he prepared it suitably with his golden sword. His saying still survives as a common proverb. Bhedari having filled the vessel returned quickly to the hermit and told him all that had happened. He bade her remain within while he went out to question the young man, for he did not know they were his sister's sons. Then Bhedari prayed the Nats, "May the young man surely come;" and she poured out the water from the gourd, and placed fruit and rice for them to eat. But when the hermit returned there were two young men with him, and both were comely and like each other. And the girl was ashamed, for she knew not whom she had met. Then holding out the gourd, she said, "The hole is even now too small;" whereupon the elder Prince again put forth his hand, and Bhedari knew that he would be her lord. And the lad said, "If I obtain a palace and a kingdom, give me the maiden as my wife and queen." His uncle promised; "and Bhedari was glad, and plighted him her troth."

I regret that the rest of the story is hardly in keeping with this tender forest scene. Our hero accomplished his end in no very heroic fashion. There happened to be a convenient queen in the neighbour-

hood, and she was speedily induced by the recluse to accept the Prince as her lord and master. To one familiar with Western fiction, where the whole plot and passion of a book is made to turn on a rigid law of monogamy or hazardous deviations from monogamic requirements, an Eastern love tale seems very simple and unexciting. There can be no motive for an Oriental hero to waver throughout a volume and a half between two equally charming heroines. He can always solve the complication off-hand by marrying them both. Bhedari, however, had to wait some time before even this divided dignity could be obtained. For the time she found herself utterly forgotten, and had to pass through many formidable trials before she became the chief consort of the king. By some quaint law of reprisal she survived her husband, and marrying his brother became the mother of "Dwattaboung," the first and most famous monarch of the Prome or Tharekhettara dynasty. She died full of years and honour, and at her death the heavens became dark, and a blazing star appeared for seven days in the western quarter.

The empire at Prome continued for about 550 years, when the Pugarâma, or Lower Pugan monarchy, was established. Anaurahta-Men-Saw, who ruled about the year A.D. 1000, is the representative Prince of this line, and, as Sir Arthur Phayre observes, the great hero of the modern Burmese people. He introduced from Thatone the Buddhist religion as it now exists in the country, and extended and consolidated his dominions northwards as far as Bhamo, and south and east throughout the region of the Taleings. On his return from a huge expedition against China he passed through "the Nine Mau States," as the country of the Shans is called throughout the Pugan chronicle. The ruling chief came to pay his respects, and seeing Anaurahta among his four principal followers, was ignorant which was the king, and presented each with a gold-embroidered mat. But the monarch with a blow from his magic spear converted all the five into one, on which he took his seat. The "Sawbwâ," amazed at this exhibition of power, gave him his daughter "Shinmonhla," and Anaurahta carried her with him to his royal palace at Pugan. She is described as exceedingly lovely, and had, moreover, a pair of ear-trinkets which contained a genuine relic of the Budh. The other queens, no doubt, were jealous of the beauty and favour the stranger enjoyed, and seeing the relic flash in her ear at night like a diamond star, they accused her to the king of being a sorceress and dealing with forbidden charms. Anaurahta believed the slander, and ordered the Princess to return to her home. She accordingly, after prostrating herself before the throne and the "Nats" who guarded the palace, passed out of the city with all her Shan attendants. The route she travelled is very minutely laid down, and it is only recently that I have ridden along part of the road. On the eleventh day she was resting on the banks of a stream which flows south of the present capital, when one of her ear-trinkets fell into the water. After a long and useless search the lady invoked divine assistance, when the jewel appeared

miraculously in the heavens amid a flock of hovering sparrows, and thence descended into its owner's hands. The Princess, unwilling that it should be profaned thereafter by vulgar use, sought for some materials to erect a shrine. The Nat king revealed to her a hidden store of bricks, and the girl with her attendants built a niched pagoda five cubits high, fronting the range of hills which rose in the east between her and her home, and therein she deposited the sacred relic.

Meantime, Anaurahta heard of all this at Pugan, and calling the two fleetest of his Indian runners, he bade them follow and observe in what position the pagoda was placed. If it fronted the south and the royal city they could quickly return; but if it was turned toward the Shan country they must slay the maiden wherever they met her. The messengers started at sunrise and reached the "Sparrow-circled Shrine" (as its name may be translated) long after dark on the following evening, exhausted with hunger and fatigue. Shinmonhla, who had been warned of their errand, furnished them with food and comfortable lodging, and induced them to wait till early dawn. Then at midnight she went out alone to the newly-erected pagoda, and fastening her handkerchief around its spire, she implored the Nat king to assist her in her terrible peril. Suddenly, yielding to her effort, the whole building moved slowly round till it faced the south and Pugaráma, and in the morning, when the messengers came to inspect it, they found they could leave the Princess unmolested. But the king's cruelty had done its work; Shinmonhla had no courage to bear up against this second blow, and scarcely had the men departed when she died of a broken heart at the foot of the shrine. The chronicle leaves untold this pitiful *dénouement*, but goes on to describe the splendour of the dagoba which Anaurahta himself and subsequent rulers enlarged and embellished. It still maintains its popularity, and at the moment I am writing crowds of Mandalay folk are streaming out to the yearly festival within its precincts. The Shans will, too, be there in all their clans, and men from Thonsê, Thénní, and Thíbaw will fill the zayàts (resting-houses) around the pagoda, and listen once again to the well-known story.

Among the zayàts which fringe the ascent to the great Mahá-myat-mani pagoda at Mandalay there is one rather more spacious than the rest, hung round with pictures, the handiwork (if the signature is to be believed) of Saya Pho Kaing, royal painter to King Manìsìthu of Sagaing. They may have been presented by some Shan worshipper after the famous image had been brought by Aloungphayà from Arrakan, and in spite of their age the colours are still vivid, and the composition clear. They are all historical subjects, but the one most prominent among them is a painting of the Shan Princess lying at the foot of the Sparrow-circled Shrine, with her attendants in a tearful group around. The treatment is not inartistic, and the faces of the women and of the two Indian runners who are standing aloof convey a genuine impression of pathos. The kerchief is still drooping from the spire of the pagoda, and

in the background is the Nat king seated on a throne with placid, immovable face. For Shinmonhla has no doubt become a goddess within his realm, and her merit in due time will reap a yet more perfect reward.

Anaurahta had a son almost as illustrious as himself. The mother was a daughter of the ruler of Wethali, who had reluctantly surrendered his child to the great king's ambassadors. The chronicle depicts her as soft, delicate, and lovely, like newly-minted gold. Spite of these attractions, she fared as badly as the maiden from Shan land, and was banished from the palace in a fit of jealous rage. Shortly before her child was born there occurred a mighty earthquake, and Anaurahta was told by his black and white astrologers that a child was coming into the world who would be the future monarch of Pugan. After having repeated King Herod's method on a still more ruthless scale through several years, it occurred to the king to inquire if his kingdom was actually in danger from the lad. On being reassured on this point he sent for Kyansittha, who became his champion and companion on all his great expeditions. Some years later, however, he mortally offended the irritable despot, who had him straightway bound with bamboo cords, and hurled his famous spear with intent to slay him. The weapon, however, glanced aside, severing the ropes, and Kyansittha, snatching it up, rushed from the palace and fled into the thick forests which lay across the river. His father despatched seven Indian runners to seize him, but they were all slain by the magic spear. The fugitive, seeing there was no hope of mercy at home, fled further north, and after many days' wandering he reached a village where there dwelt an aged monk and his niece Sambula. The girl had long been assured of some high destiny, for it happened that once while picking cotton she had fallen asleep and a swarm of bees had settled on her robe. So her uncle instructed her that on a certain day a husband would come from the West, and that she must get good food and fair water ready to refresh him. And on the day foretold Kyansittha chanced to arrive, and seeing the maiden's beauty he asked for water and plucked some bitter tamarinds from a tree which grew within the garden. The rahan marvelled at seeing him eat, and desired some of the fruit at his hands. Tasting them, he found they had become sweet and luscious, with a fragrance like the fruit of the Nats, and he prompted Sambula to give the stranger all that he demanded. Then Kyansittha, having eaten and drunk, turned and said to the maiden, "You have given me food and drink, and I will give you my life in return." And he lived there in exile with her for many years. But after his father's death Kyansittha was invited back to court by his elder brother Saulu, who had succeeded to the throne. Before leaving he gave Sambula a ring, and charged her if she gave birth to a female child to sell the ring and provide for its maintenance; but if to a male, to bring it with the ring to the royal palace. And after a few years Saulu was slain by the King of Pegu,

and Kyansittha became monarch of Pugan, to the great joy of all the people. Meantime Sambula had become mother of a male child, and when it was seven years old she brought it on foot to the great city, and sought to show it to the king. But at the time of her arrival, footsore and faded after her long journey, Kyansittha was holding a review of all his soldiers, and not daring to enter the palace she sat down outside the gate, holding the child by the hand. The royal attendants addressed her insolently and bade her begone, until she supplicated them that she might be allowed to see the "golden foot." So they went in and told their master, and he gave orders straightway that the woman should be admitted. But when he saw her it was his wife Sambula, and he called her to him and praised her before all his nobles, and he gave her rich apparel and a palace and retinue, and placing the child on his knee he acknowledged him as his son, and mourned they should have been absent so many years. And the lad grew up in the palace, and when he became of age his father made him the ruler of Dhanyavati (Arrakan), where he reigned with great valour and renown.

One or other of these three narratives will be found in the *répertoire* of every company of players, and two common points of resemblance will be noticed. In a Burmese melodrama it is the lady who has the suffering and the struggle, the gentleman being generally very comfortable and indifferent throughout. This may be a relic from the older Aryan myths, where Síta, Damayantí, and Maddí Deví, the incomparable heroine of the *Wethantara Játaka*, are notable types of womanly constancy and endurance. But it arises in a great measure also from the social independence of the sex, in which particular Burma contrasts favourably with even European communities. It is curious, however, to observe how women are invariably made to assume the leading characters in the popular drama. And a modern *rôle* of "minthami" (or prima donna) is a really very trying performance. I have followed the chronicle in omitting the details of my heroines' travels; but these, of course, are the principal "business" on the stage. The forests which the unfortunate wanderers have to traverse are full to repletion not only of bandits and wild beasts, but of

> Gorgons, hydras, and chimæras dire,

and other horrific samples of the Burmese pandemonium; and a "Bhílú" or "Galon" is sure to be met with at every turn of the road. They all have the most nefarious designs, and vent their disappointment in direct personal aggression. I have seen an actress most severely pummelled by a violent gentleman with a red mask and hobby-horse, who called himself a "Rekkhaik," because she announced her unalterable devotion to her absent spouse. Occasionally even death is made to result from these savage assaults, when a *deus ex machinâ* appears in the shape of the Nat king on the wooden chair. In most cases, too, the situation is intensified by the poor lady being seized with the pangs of maternity

just after one of these encounters. It is simply an ingenious device for enabling the actress to get a little rest after her exertions, and there is absolutely nothing indecorous about it. A few years ago there was some discussion about the alleged immorality of native plays. It cannot be denied that one generally hears a certain amount of coarse language and *double-entendre*, but this is always "gag" introduced by the clowns and attendants, and is quite extraneous to the piece. In the acting itself there is rarely anything unseemly, and though a woman's dress in ordinary life is, to say the least, not calculated to avoid *exposés*, her stage costume is unexceptionable.

The second point of resemblance is still more characteristic. Each episode represents a girl of humble extraction (Shinmonhla was even worse off, being a foreigner) marrying a prince and becoming a veritable queen. Modern queens at Mandalay are in reality most unenviable beings, as they alone, among their countrywomen, are kept in strict seclusion with absolutely nothing to do. But to a Burmese damsel, to sit in a palace and be called "phayà," with a white umbrella and a score of attendants, appears the highest pinnacle of feminine happiness. And this pinnacle is still attainable by any young woman with decent looks and opportunities. Did not the mother of the present chief queen, when a simple bazaar-seller, attract royal attention and become a royal consort through her petticoat having been blown (some say *not* accidentally) within the royal precincts? All depends on "kan," that is, the state of your good-deeds-account, through all foregoing existences, as compared with your bad-deeds-account. As the "merit" outbalances the "demerit," so you will reap good fortune here. This explanation and justification, so to speak, of luck is quite the most inviting tenet of the whole Buddhist theosophy. No one, of course, has any conception of how his account actually stands, but it is quite possible that he may have a large balance to his credit and reap the reward the next visit that he pays to the palace. For the king, as the sole fountain of honour, naturally appears the great exponent and executant of fate. His fitful favour or aversion (with all the consequences each implies) are quite inexplicable on any other theory. To a Burman this chance and caprice is not unattractive, and has, in fact, done much to secure his acquiescence in the rule of as cruel a set of tyrants as ever handled an Eastern sceptre. And it is this element that he looks for in vain in the dull undeviating rhythm of our own *régime*, and it is to be feared that a "mahámengyee"* and municipalities will not wholly reconcile him to the loss.

H. L. ST. BARBE.

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* The local title for Chief Commissioner.

"See here, Sissy," said Percival, "we are friends."

"For Percival."

CHAPTER L.

Through the Night.

THE village clock struck five. As the last lingering stroke died upon the air, there was the sound of a carriage rapidly approaching. Carroll raised his head when it stopped at the gate, and saw Hardwicke spring out, and help a lady to alight. She was an old lady, who walked quickly to the house, looking neither to right nor left, and vanished within the doorway. Hardwicke stopped, as if to give some order to the driver, and then hurried after her. Archie stared vaguely, first at them, and then at the man, who turned his horses and went round to the stables. When they were out of sight, he laid his head down again. The little scene had been a vivid picture, which stamped itself with curious distinctness on his brain, yet failed to convey any meaning whatever. He had not the faintest idea of the agony of love and fear in Mrs. Middleton's heart as she passed him. To Archie, just then, the whole universe was *his* agony, and there was no room for more.

Ten minutes later came Dr. Grey's brougham. The doctor, as he jumped out, told his man to wait. He went from the gate to the house more hurriedly than Mrs. Middleton, and his anxiety was more marked; but he found time to look round as he went, with keen eyes, which rested for an instant on the young sailor, though he lay half hidden by the bushes. He too vanished, as the others had vanished.

About an hour later he came out again, and Fothergill followed him. The doctor started when he encountered his eager eyes. Fothergill demanded his opinion. He began some of the usual speeches in which men wrap up the ghastly word "death" in such disguise that it can hardly be recognised.

The soldier cut him short: "Please to speak plain English, Dr. Grey."

The doctor admitted the very greatest danger.

"Danger—yes," said Fothergill; "but is there any hope? I am not a fool—I shan't go in and scare the women—is there any hope?"

The answer was written on the doctor's face. He had known Sissy Langton from the time when she came, a tiny child, to Brackenhill. He shook his head, and murmured something about "even if there were no other injury—the spine——"

Fothergill caught a glimpse of a hideous possibility, and answered with an oath. It was not the profanity of the words, so much as the fury with which they were charged, that horrified the good old doctor. "My dear sir," he remonstrated gently, "we must remember that this is God's will."

"God's will—God's will! Are you sure it isn't the devil's?" said Fothergill. "It seems more like it. If you think it is God's will, you may persuade yourself it's yours, for aught I know. But I'm not such a damned hypocrite as to make believe it's mine."

And with a mechanical politeness, curiously at variance with his face and speech, he lifted his hat to the doctor, as he turned back to the farmhouse.

So Sissy's doom was spoken. To linger a few hours, more or less, in helpless pain, and then to die. The sun, which had dawned so joyously, was going down as serenely as it had dawned; but it did not matter much to Sissy now. She was sensible, she knew Mrs. Middleton. When the old lady stooped over her, she looked up, smiled faintly, and said, "I fell."

"Yes, my darling, I know," Aunt Harriet said.

"Can I go home?" Sissy asked, after a pause.

"No, dear, you must not think of it—you mustn't ask to go home."

"I thought not," said Sissy.

Mrs. Middleton asked her if she felt much pain.

"I don't know," she said, and closed her eyes.

Later, Henry Hardwicke sent in a message, and the old lady came out to speak to him. He was standing by an open casement in the passage, looking out at the sunset through the orchard boughs. "What is it, Harry?" she said.

He started, and turned round. "I beg your pardon, Mrs. Middleton, but I thought in case you wanted to send any telegrams—if—if—I mean, I thought you might want to send some, and there is not very much time."

She put her hand to her head. "I ought to—oughtn't I?" she said. "Who should be sent for?"

"Mr. Hammond?" Hardwicke questioned, doubtfully.

Something like relief or pleasure lighted her sad eyes. "Yes—yes; send for Godfrey Hammond. He will come." She was about to leave him, but the young fellow stepped forward. "Mrs. Middleton!" Was

it the clear red light from the window that suddenly flushed his face? "Mrs. Middleton, shall I send for Mr. Percival Thorne?"

She stopped, looking strangely at him. Something in his voice surprised her. "For Percival?" she said.

"May I? I think he ought to come." The hot colour was burning on his cheeks. What right had he to betray the secret which he believed he had discovered? And yet, could he stand by, and not speak for her, when she had so little time in which to speak for herself?

"Is it for his sake?" said Mrs. Middleton, "or is it that you think——? Well, let it be so. Send for Percival. Yes," she added, "perhaps I have misunderstood. Yes, send at once for Percival."

"I'll go," said Harry, hurrying down the passage. "The message shall be sent off at once. I'll take it to Fordborough."

"Must you go yourself?" Mrs. Middleton raised her voice a little as he moved away.

"No; let me go," said Captain Fothergill, turning the further corner. "I am going to Fordborough. What is it? I will take it. Mrs. Middleton, you will let me be your messenger?"

"You are very good," she said. "Harry, you will write—I can't. Oh, I must go back!" And she vanished, leaving the two men face to face.

"I've no telegraph forms," said Harry, after a pause. "If you would take the paper to my father, he will send the messages."

Fothergill nodded silently and went out to make ready for his journey. Hardwicke followed him and stood in the porch, pencilling on the back of an old letter. When Fothergill had given his orders, he walked up to Carroll, touched the lad's shoulder with the tips of his fingers, and stood away. "Come," he said.

Archie raised himself from the ground, and stumbled to his feet. "Come?—where?"

"To Fordborough."

The boy started and stepped back. He looked at the farmhouse, he looked at his cousin. "I'll come afterwards," he faltered.

"Nonsense," said Fothergill; "I'm going now, and of course you go with me."

Archie shrank away, keeping his eyes fixed, as if in a kind of fascination, on his cousin's terrible eyes. The idea of going back, alone with Raymond, was awful to him.

"No; I can't come, Ray, indeed I can't," he said; "I'll walk. I'd much rather; I would indeed."

"What for?" said Fothergill; "you are doing no good here. Do you know I have a message to take? I can't be kept waiting. Don't be a fool," he said, in a lower but not less imperative voice.

Archie glanced despairingly round. Hardwicke came forward with the paper in his outstretched hand.

"Leave him here, Captain Fothergill. I dare say I shall go to the

inn in the village, and he may go with me. He can take you the earliest news to-morrow morning."

Archie looked breathlessly from one to the other. "As you please," said Fothergill, and strode off without another word. The boy tried to say something in the way of thanks. "Oh, it's nothing," Hardwicke replied. "You won't care what sort of quarters they may turn out to be, I know." And he went back to the house, with a little shrug of his shoulders, at the idea of having young Carroll tied to him in this fashion. He did not want the boy, but Hardwicke could never help sacrificing himself.

So Archie went to the gate, and watched his cousin ride away, a slim black figure, on his black horse, against the burning sky. Fothergill never turned his head. Where was the use of looking back? He was intent only on his errand, and when that piece of paper should have been delivered into Mr. Hardwicke's hands, the last link between Sissy Langton and himself would be broken. There would be no further service to render. Fothergill did not know that the message he carried was to summon his rival, but it would have made no difference in his feelings if he had. Nothing made any difference now.

Mrs. Middleton sat by Sissy's bedside in the clear evening light. Harry Hardwicke's words haunted her—why did he think that Sissy wanted Percival? They had parted a year ago, and she had believed that Sissy was cured of her liking for him. It was Sissy who had sent him away, and she had been brighter and gayer of late—indeed, Mrs. Middleton had fancied that Walter Latimer—Well, that was over, but if Sissy cared for Percival——

A pair of widely-opened eyes were fixed on her. "Am I going to die, Aunt Harriet?"

"I hope not. Oh, my darling, I pray that you may live."

"I think I am going to die. Will it be very soon? Would there be time to send——"

"We will send for anything, or anyone you want. Do you feel worse, dear? Time to send for whom?"

"For Percival?"

"Harry Hardwicke has sent for him already. Perhaps he has the message by now, it is an hour and a half since the messenger went."

"When will he come?"

"To-morrow, darling."

There was a pause. Then the faint voice came again. "What time?"

Mrs. Middleton went to the door, and called softly to Hardwicke. He had been looking in Bradshaw, and she returned directly.

"Percival will come by the express to-night. He will be at Fordborough by the quarter-past nine train, and Harry will meet him, and bring him over at once—by ten o'clock, he says, or a few minutes later."

Sissy's brows contracted for a moment; she was calculating the time. "What is it now?" she said.

"Twenty minutes to eight."

Fourteen hours and a half. The whole night between herself and Percival. The darkness must come and must go—the sun must set and must again be high in the heavens, before he could stand by her side. It seemed as if Sissy were going down into the blackness of an awful gulf, where Death was waiting for her. Would she have strength to escape him, to toil up the further side, and to reach the far-off to-morrow, and Percival?

"Aunt Harriet," she said, "shall I live till then? I want to speak to him."

"Yes, my darling—indeed you will. Don't talk so. You will break my heart. Perhaps God will spare you——"

"No," said Sissy. "No."

Between eight and nine Hardwicke was summoned again. Mrs. Latimer wanted some one to go to Latimer's Court, to take the latest news, and to say that it was impossible she could return that night. "You see they went away before Dr. Grey came," she said. "I have written a little note. Can you find me a messenger?"

"I will either find one, or I will go myself," he replied.

"Oh, I didn't mean to trouble you. And wait a moment, for Mrs. Middleton wants him to go on to her house. She will come and speak to you when I go back to the poor girl."

"How is Miss Langton?"

"I hardly know. I think she is wandering a little. She talked just now about some embroidery she has been doing—asked for it in fact."

"When Dr. Grey was obliged to go, he didn't think there would be any change before he came back, surely," said Hardwicke anxiously.

"No. But she can't know what she is saying—can she? Poor girl, she will never do another stitch." Mrs. Latimer fairly broke down. The unfinished embroidery which never could be finished, brought the truth home to her. It is hard to realise that a life, with its interlacing roots and fibres, is broken off short.

"Oh, Mrs. Latimer, don't—don't!" Harry exclaimed, aghast at her tears. "For Mrs. Middleton's sake!" He rushed away, and returned with wine. "If you give way, what will become of us?"

She was better in a few minutes, and able to go back, while Harry waited in quiet confidence for Mrs. Middleton. He was not afraid of a burst of helpless weeping when she came. She was gentle, yielding, delicate, but there was something of the old Squire's obstinacy in her, and in a supreme emergency it came out as firmness. She looked old and frail as she stepped into the passage, and closed the door after her. Her hand shook, but her eyes met his bravely, and her lips were firm.

"You'll have some wine too," he said, pouring it out as a matter of course. "You can drink it while you tell me what I am to do."

She took the glass with a slight inclination of her head, and explained that she wanted an old servant, who had been Sissy's nurse when she was

a little child. "Mrs. Latimer is very kind," she said. "But Sissy will like her own people best. And Sarah would be broken-hearted——" She paused. "Here is a list of things that I wish her to bring."

"Mrs. Latimer thought Miss Langton was not quite herself," he said inquiringly.

"Do you mean because she talked of her work? Oh, I don't think so. She answers quite sensibly—she speaks quite clearly. That was the only thing."

"Then is it down in the list—this needlework? Or where is it to be found?"

"You will bring it?" said Mrs. Middleton. "Well, perhaps——"

"If she should ask again!" he said.

"True. Yes, yes, bring it." She told him where to find the little case. "The fancy may haunt her. How am I to thank you, Harry?"

"Not at all," he said. "Only let me do what I can."

It was nearly eleven before Hardwicke had accomplished his double errand, and returned with Sarah. The stars were out, the ruins of the priory rose in great black masses against the sky, the farmhouse windows, beneath the overhanging eaves, were like bright eyes gazing out into the night. Dr. Grey had come back in the interval, and had seen his patient. There was nothing new to say, and nothing to be done, except to make the path to the grave as little painful as might be. He was taking a nap in Mr. Greenwell's arm-chair, when the young man came in, but woke up, clear and alert, in a moment. "Ah, you have come," he said, recognising the old servant. "That's well. You'll save your mistress a little. Only, mind, we mustn't have any crying. If there is anything of that sort, you will do more harm than good."

Sarah deigned no reply, but passed on. Mrs. Middleton came out to meet them. Sissy had not spoken. She lay with her eyes shut, and moaned now and then. "Are you going home, Harry?" said the old lady.

"Only into the village. I've got a room at the Latimer Arms. It isn't two minutes' walk from here, so I can be fetched directly if I'm wanted."

"And you will be sure to meet the train?"

"I will. You may depend upon me. But I shall come here first."

"Good-night, then. Go and get some rest."

Hardwicke went off to look for Archie Carroll. He found him in the square, flagged hall, sitting on the corner of a window-seat, with his head leaning against the frame, among Mrs. Greenwell's geraniums. "Come along, old fellow," said Harry.

There was only a glimmering candle, and the hall was very dim. Archie got up submissively, and groped his way after his guide. "Where are we going?" he asked, as the door was opened.

"To a little public-house close by. We couldn't ask the Greenwells to take us in."

As they went out into the road, the priory rose up suddenly on the left and towered awfully above them. Carroll shuddered, drew closer to his companion, and kept his eyes fixed on the ground. "I feel as if I were the ghost of myself, and those were the ghosts of the ruins," he said as he hurried past.

The flight of fancy was altogether beyond Hardwicke. "You've been sitting alone, and thinking. There has been nothing for you to do, and I couldn't help leaving you. Here we are."

They turned into the little sanded parlour of the ale-house. Hardwicke had looked in previously and given his orders, and supper was laid ready for them. He sat down and began to help himself, but Archie at first refused to eat.

"Nonsense," said Harry. "You have had nothing since the beginning of the day. We must not break down—any of us." And with a little persuasion he prevailed, and saw the lad make a tolerable supper, and drink some brandy and water afterwards. "Vile brandy!" said Hardwicke as he set his tumbler down. Archie was leaning with both elbows on the table, gazing at him. His eyes were heavy and swollen, and there were purple shadows below them.

"Mr. Hardwicke," be said, "you've been very good to me—do you think it was my fault?"

"Do I think what was your fault?"

"*This!*" Archie said. "To-day."

"No! Not if I understand it."

"Ray said if he had been there——"

"I wish he had been! But we must not expect old heads on young shoulders. How did it happen?"

"We climbed up on the wall, and she was saying how narrow and broken it was, and I picked some of that stuff, and called to her, and as she looked back——"

Hardwicke groaned. "It was madly imprudent," he said. "But I don't blame you. You didn't think. Poor fellow, I only hope you won't think too much in future. Come, it's time for bed."

"I don't want to sleep," Archie answered. "I can't sleep."

"Very well," said Hardwicke. "But I must try and get a little rest. They had only one room for us, so if you can't sleep you'll keep quiet, and let a fellow see what he can do in that line. And you may call me in the morning, if I don't wake. But don't worry yourself, for I shall."

"What time?" said Carroll.

"Oh, from five to six—not later than six."

But, in half an hour, it was Carroll who lay, worn out, and sleeping soundly, and Hardwicke who was counting the slow minutes of that intolerable night.

Sarah had been indignant that Dr. Grey should tell her not to cry. But when Sissy looked up with a gentle smile of recognition, and, instead

of calling her by her name, said "Nurse," as she used to say in old times, the good woman was very near it indeed, and was obliged to go away to the window to try to swallow the lump that rose up in her throat and almost choked her.

Mrs. Middleton sat by her darling's bedside. She had placed the little work-case in full view, and presently Sissy noticed it, and would have it opened. The half-finished strip of embroidery was laid within easy reach of hand and eye. She smiled but was not satisfied. "The case," she said. Her fingers strayed feebly among the little odds and ends which it contained, and closed over something which she kept.

Then there was a long silence, unbroken till Sissy was thirsty, and wanted something to drink. "What time?" she said when she had finished.

"Half-past twelve."

"It's very dark."

"We will have another candle," said Aunt Harriet.

"No, the candle only makes me see how dark it is all round."

Again there was silence, but not so long this time. And again Sissy broke it. "Aunt Harriet, he is coming now."

"Yes, darling, he is coming."

"I feel as if I saw the train, with red lights in front, coming through the night, always coming, but never any nearer."

"But it *is* nearer every minute. Percival is nearer now than when you spoke."

Sissy said "Yes," and was quiet again, till between one and two. Then Mrs. Middleton perceived that her eyes were open. "What is it, dear child?" she said.

"The night is so long."

"Sissy," said Aunt Harriet softly. "I want you to listen to me. A year ago, when Godfrey died, and I talked about the money that I hoped to leave you one day, you told me what you should like me to do with it instead, because you had enough, and you thought it was not fair. I didn't quite understand then, and I would not promise. Do you remember?"

"Yes."

"Sissy, shall I promise now? I've been thinking about it, and I've no wish on earth but to make you happy. Will it make you happier if I promise now that it shall be as you said?"

"Yes," said Sissy, with eager eyes.

"Then I do promise. All that is mine to leave he shall have."

Sissy answered with a smile. "Kiss me," she said. And so the promise was sealed. After that the worst of the night seemed somehow to be over. Sissy slept a little, and Aunt Harriet nodded once or twice in the easy chair. Starting into wakefulness after one of these moments, she saw the outline of the window faintly defined in grey, and thanked God that the dawn had come.

CHAPTER LI.

By the Express.

Mr. Hardwicke, not knowing Percival Thorne's precise address, had telegraphed to Godfrey Hammond, begging him to forward the message without delay. A couple of days earlier Hammond had suddenly taken it into his head that he was tired of being in town, and would go away somewhere. In a sort of whimsical amusement at his own mood, he decided that the Land's End ought to suit a misanthrope, and promptly took a ticket for Penzance, as a considerable step in the right direction.

It made no difference to Percival, for Hammond had left full directions with a trustworthy servant, in case any letters should come for Mr. Thorne, and the man sent the message on to Brenthill at once. But it made a difference to Hammond himself. When Hardwicke despatched the telegram to his address in town, Godfrey lay on the turf at the Lizard Head, gazing southward across the sunlit sea, while the seabirds screamed, and the white waves broke on the jagged rocks far below.

But with Percival there was no delay. The message found him in Bellevue Street, though he did not return there immediately after his parting with Judith. He wanted the open air, the sky overhead, movement, and liberty, to calm the joyful tumult in heart and brain. He hastened to the nearest point whence he could look over trees and fields. The prospect was not very beautiful. The trees were few, some cropped willows by a mud-banked rivulet, and a group or two of gaunt and melancholy elms. And the fields had a trodden, suburban aspect, which made it hardly needful to stick up boards describing them as eligible building ground. Yet there was grass, such as it was, and daisies sprinkled here and there, and soft cloud-shadows gliding over it. Percival's unreal and fantastic dream had perished suddenly, when Judith put her hand in his. Now, as he walked across these meadows, he saw a new vision, that dream of noble, simple poverty, which, if it could but be realised, would be the fairest of all.

When he returned from his walk, and came once more to the well-known street which he was learning to call "home," he was so much calmer that he thought he was quite himself again. Not the languid hopeless self who had lived there once, but a self, young, vigorous, elate, rejoicing in the present, and looking confidently towards the future.

> "This I can tell,
> That all will go well,"

was the key-note of his mood. He felt as if he trod on air, as if he had but to walk boldly forward, and every obstacle must give way. The door of No. 13 was open, and a boy, who had brought a telegram, was turning away from it. Hurrying in, with eager eyes, and his face bright

with unspoken joy, Percival nearly ran up against Mrs. Bryant and Emma, whose heads were close together over the address on the envelope.

"Lor'! Mr. Thorne, how you startled me! It's for you," said his landlady.

He went up the stairs, two at a time, with his message in his hand. Here was some good news—not for one moment did he dream it could be other than good news—come to crown this day, already the whitest of his life. He tore the paper open, and read it by the red sunset light, hotly reflected from a wilderness of tiles.

He read it twice—thrice—caught at the window-frame to steady himself, and stood staring vaguely at the smoke which curled upward from a neighbouring chimney. He was stunned. The words seemed to have a meaning, and no meaning. "This is not how people receive news of death, surely," he thought. "I suppose I am in my right senses—or is it a dream?"

He made a strong effort to regain his self-command, but all certainties eluded him. This was not the first time that he had taken up a telegram, and believed that he read the tidings of Sissy's death. He had misunderstood it now as then. It could not be. But why could he not wake?

"Ashendale"—Yes, he remembered Ashendale. He had ridden past the ruins the last day he ever rode with Sissy, the day that Horace came home. It belonged to the Latimers—to Walter Latimer. And Sissy was dying at Ashendale.

All at once he knew that it was no dream. But the keen edge of pain awoke him to the thought of what he had to do, and sent him to hunt among a heap of papers for a time-table. He drew a long breath. The express started at 10.5, and it was now but twenty minutes past eight.

He caught up his hat and hurried to the office. Mr. Ferguson, who seldom left much before that time, was on the doorstep. While he was getting into his dogcart, Percival hastily explained that he had been summoned on a matter of life and death. "Sorry to hear it," said the lawyer, as he took the reins—"hope you may find things better than you expect. We shall see you again when you come back." And with a nod he rattled down the street. Percival stood on the pavement gazing after him, when he suddenly remembered that he had no money. "I might have asked him to give me my half-week's salary," he reflected. "Not that that would have paid my fare."

A matter of life and death! Sissy waiting for him at Ashendale, and no money to pay for a railway ticket! It would have been absurd, if it had not been horrible. What had he to sell or pawn? By the time he could go to Bellevue Street and return, would not the shops be shut? It was a quarter to nine already. He did not even know where any pawnbroker lived, nor what he could take to him, and the time was

terribly short. He was hurrying homewards while these thoughts passed through his mind, when Judith's words came back to him,—"I have a pound or two to spare, and I feel quite rich." He took the first turning towards Miss Macgregor's house.

Outside her door he halted for a moment. If they would not let him see Judith, how was he to convey his request? He felt in his pocket, found the telegram, and pencilled below the message, "Sissy Langton was once to have been my wife—we parted, and I have never seen her since. I have not money enough for my railway fare—can you help me?" He folded it, and rang the bell.

No, he could not see Miss Lisle. She was particularly engaged. "Very well," he said. "Be so good as to take this note to her, and I will wait for the answer." His manner impressed the girl so much that, although she had been carefully trained by Miss Macgregor, she cast but one hesitating glance at the umbrella-stand, before she went on her errand.

Percival waited, eager to be off, yet well assured that it was all right since it was in Judith's hands. Presently the servant returned, and gave him a little packet. The wax of the seal was still warm. He opened it where he stood, and by the light of Miss Macgregor's hall lamp, read the couple of lines it contained.

"I cannot come, but I send you all the money I have. I pray God you may be in time. Yours, JUDITH."

There were two sovereigns and some silver. He told the girl to thank Miss Lisle, and went out into the dusk, as the clocks were striking nine. Ten minutes brought him to Bellevue Street, and rushing up to his room he began to put a few things into a little travelling-bag. In his haste he neglected to shut the door, and Mrs. Bryant, whose curiosity had been excited, came upon him in the midst of this occupation.

"And what may be the meaning of this, Mr. Thorne, if I may make so bold as to ask?" she said, eyeing him doubtfully from the doorway.

Percival explained that he had had bad news, and was off by the express.

Mrs. Bryant's darkest suspicions were aroused. She said it was a likely story.

"Why, you gave me the telegram yourself," he answered indifferently, while he caught up a couple of collars. He was too much absorbed to heed either Mrs. Bryant or his packing.

"And who sent it, I should like to know?"

Percival made no answer, and she began to grumble about people who had money enough to travel all over the country at a minute's notice, if they liked, and none to pay their debts—people who made promises by the hour together, and then sneaked off, leaving boxes with nothing inside them, she'd be bound——

Thus baited, Percival at last turned angrily upon her, but, before he could utter a word, another voice interposed.

"What are you always worrying about, Ma? Do come down, and have your supper, and let Mr. Thorne finish his packing. He'll pay you every halfpenny he owes you—don't you know that?" And the door was shut with such decision, that it was a miracle that Mrs. Bryant was not dashed against the opposite wall. "Come along," said Lydia, "there's toasted cheese."

Percival ran downstairs five minutes later with his bag in his hand. He turned into his sitting-room, picked up a few papers, and thrust them into his desk. He was in the act of locking it, when he heard a step behind him, and looking round he saw Lydia. She had a cup of tea, and some bread-and-butter, which she set down before him. "You haven't had a morsel since the middle of the day," she said. "Just you drink this—Oh, you must—there's lots of time."

"Miss Bryant, this is very kind of you, but I don't think——"

"Just you drink it," said Lydia, "and eat a bit too, or you'll be good for nothing." And while Percival hastily obeyed, she glanced round the room. "Nobody'll meddle with your things while you're gone—don't you trouble yourself."

"Oh, I didn't suspect that anyone would," he replied, hardly thinking whether it was likely or not, as he swallowed the bread-and-butter.

"Well, that was very nice of you, I'm sure. *I* should have suspected a lot if I'd been you," said Lydia, candidly. "But nobody shall. Now you aren't going to leave that tea. Why, it wants twenty minutes to ten, and not six minutes' walk to the station."

Percival finished the tea. "Thank you very much, Miss Bryant."

"And I say," Lydia pursued, pulling her curl, with less than her usual consideration for its beauty, "I suppose you *have* got money enough? Because if not, I'll lend you a little. Don't you mind what Ma says, Mr. Thorne. I know you're all right."

"You are very good," said Percival. "I didn't expect so much kindness, and I've been borrowing already, so I needn't trouble you. But thank you for your confidence in me, and for your thoughtfulness." He held out his hand to Lydia, and thus bade farewell to Bellevue Street.

She stood for a moment looking after him. Only a few hours before, she would have rejoiced in any small trouble or difficulty which might have befallen Mr. Thorne. But when he turned round upon her mother and herself, as they stood at his door, her spite had vanished before the sorrowful anxiety of his eyes. She had frequently declared that Mr. Thorne was no gentleman, and that she despised him, but she knew in her heart that he *was* a gentleman, and she was ashamed of her mother's behaviour. Lydia was capable of being magnanimous, provided the object of her magnanimity were a man. I doubt if she could have been magnanimous to a woman. But Percival Thorne was a young and handsome man, and though she did not know what his errand might be, she knew

that she was not sending him to Miss Lisle. Standing before his glass, she smoothed back her hair with both hands, arranged the ribbon at her throat, and admired the blue earrings, and a large locket which she wore suspended from a chain. Even while she thought kindly of Mr. Thorne, and wished him well, she was examining her complexion and her hands, with the eye of a critic. "I don't believe that last stuff is a mite of good," she said to herself; "and it's no end of bother. I might as well pitch the bottle out of window. It was just as well that he'd borrowed the money of some one else, but I'm glad I offered it. I wonder when he'll come back." And with that Lydia returned to her toasted cheese.

Percival had had a nervous fear of some hindrance on his way to the station. It was so urgent that he should go by this train, that the necessity oppressed him like a nightmare. An earthquake seemed a not improbable thing. He was seriously afraid that he might lose his way, during the five minutes' walk through familiar streets. He imagined an error of half an hour or so in all the Brenthill clocks. He hardly knew what he expected, but he felt it a relief when he came to the station, and found it standing in its right place, quietly awaiting him. He was the first to take a ticket, and the moment the train drew up by the platform, his hand was on the door of a carriage, though, before getting in, he stopped a porter to inquire if this were the express. The porter answered "Yes, sir—all right," with the half smile of superior certainty. What else could it be? Thorne took his place, and waited a few minutes, which seemed an eternity. Then the engine screamed, throbbed, and with quickening speed rushed out into the night.

A man was asleep in one corner of the carriage, otherwise Percival was alone. His nervous anxiety subsided, since nothing further depended upon him till he reached town, and he sat thinking of Sissy, and of that brief engagement which had already receded into a shadowy past. "It was a mistake," he mused, "and she found it out before it was too late. But I believe her poor little heart has been aching for me, lest she wounded me too cruelly that night. It wasn't her fault. She would have hid her fear of me, poor child, if she had been able. And she was so sorry for me in my trouble. I don't think she could be content to go on her way, and take her happiness now, while my life was spoilt and miserable. Poor little Sissy, she will be glad to know—— "

And then he remembered that it was to a dying Sissy that the tidings of marriage and hope must be uttered, if uttered at all. And he sat as it were in a dull dream, trying to realise how the life which, in the depths of his poverty, had seemed to him so beautiful and safe, was suddenly cut short, and how Sissy at that moment lay in the darkness, waiting—waiting—waiting. The noise of the train took up his thought, and set it to a monotonous repetition of "Waiting at Ashendale!—Waiting at Ashendale!" If only she might live till he could reach her! He seemed to be hurrying onward, yet no nearer. His overwrought brain caught up the fancy that Death and he were side by side, racing together

through the dark, at breathless, headlong speed, to Sissy, where she waited for them both.

Outside, the landscape lay dim and small, dwarfed by the presence of the night. And with the lights burning on its breast, as Sissy saw them in her half waking visions, the express rushed southward across the level blackness of the land, beneath the arch of midnight sky.

CHAPTER LII.

"Quand on a trouvé ce qu'on cherchait, on n'a pas le temps de le dire: il faut mourir."—J. JOUBERT.

WHEN the grey of the early morning had changed to golden sunlight, and the first faint twittering of the birds gave place to fuller melody, Mrs. Middleton went softly to the window, opened it, and fastened it back. She drew a long breath of the warm air, fresh from the beanfields, and looking down into the little orchard below, she saw Harry Hardwicke, who stepped forward, and looked up at her. She signed to him to wait, and a couple of minutes later she joined him.

"How is she? How has she passed the night?" he asked eagerly.

"She is no worse. She has lived through it bravely, with one thought—you were very right to send for Percival."

Hardwicke looked down, and coloured as he had coloured when he spoke of him before. "I'm glad," he said. "I'm off to fetch him in about an hour and a half."

"Nothing from Godfrey Hammond?" she asked after a pause.

"No. I'll ask at my father's as I go by. He will either come, or we shall hear, unless he is out."

"Of course," the old lady answered. "Godfrey Hammond would not fail me. And now good-by, Harry, till you bring Percival."

She went away as swiftly and lightly as she had come a minute before, and left Hardwicke standing on the turf under the apple-trees, gazing up at the open casement. A June morning, sun shining, soft winds blowing, a young lover under his lady's window—it should have been a perfect poem. And the lady within lay crushed and maimed, dying in the very heart of her June!

Hardwicke let himself out through the little wicket gate, and went back to the Latimer Arms. He entered the bedroom without disturbing Archie, who lay, with his sunburnt face on the white pillow, smiling in his sleep. He could not find it in his heart to arouse him. The boy's lips parted, he murmured a word or two, and seemed to sink into a yet deeper slumber. Hardwicke went softly out, gave the landlady directions about breakfast, and returned, watch in hand. "I suppose I must," he said to himself.

But he stopped short. Carroll stirred, stretched himself, his eyes

were half open, evidently his waking was a pleasant one. But suddenly the unfamiliar aspect of the room attracted his attention, he looked eagerly round, a shadow swept across his face, and he turned and saw Hardwicke. "It's true!" he said, and flung out his arms in a paroxysm of despair.

Harry walked to the window and leant out. Presently a voice behind him asked, "Have you been to the farm, Mr. Hardwicke?"

"Yes," said Harry. "But there is no news. She passed a tolerably quiet night. There is no change."

"I've been asleep," said Archie, after a pause. "I never thought I should sleep." He looked ashamed of having done so.

"It would have been strange if you hadn't. You were worn out."

"My watch has run down," the other continued. "What is the time?"

"Twenty minutes past seven. I want to speak to you, Carroll. I think you had better go home."

"Home? To Fordborough? To Raymond?"

"No—really home, to your own people. You can write to your cousin. You don't want to go back to him?"

Archie shook his head. Then a sudden sense of injustice to Fothergill prompted him to say, "Ray was never hard on me before."

"You mustn't think about that," Hardwicke replied. "People don't weigh their words at such times. But, Carroll, you can do nothing here, —less than nothing. You'll be better away. Give me your address, and I'll write—any news there is. Look sharp now, and you can go into Fordborough with me, and catch the up-train."

As they drove through the green lanes, along which they had passed the day before, Archie looked right and left, recalling the incidents of that earlier drive. Already he was better, possessing his sorrow with greater keenness and fulness than at first, but not so miserably possessed by it. Hardly a word was spoken till they stood on the platform, and a far-off puff of white showed the coming train. Then he said, "I shall never forget your kindness, Mr. Hardwicke. If ever there's anything I can do——"

"You'll do it," said Harry with a smile.

"That I will! And you'll write?"

Hardwicke answered, "Yes." He knew too well *what* it was he promised to write, to say a word more.

It was a relief to him when Carroll was gone, and he could pace the platform, and watch for the London train. He looked through the open doorway, and saw his dogcart waiting in the road, and the horse tossing his head impatiently in the sunshine. Through all his anxiety, or rather, side by side with his anxiety, he was conscious of a current of interest in all manner of trivial things. He thought of the price he had given for the horse, five months before, and of Latimer's opinion of his bargain. He noticed the station-master in the distance, and remembered that some

one had said he drank. He watched a row of small birds sitting on the telegraph wires, just outside the station, and all at once the London train came gliding rapidly and unexpectedly out of the cutting close by, and was there.

A hurried rush along the line of carriages, with his heart sinking lower at every step, a despairing glance round, and he perceived the man he came to meet walking off at the further end of the platform. He came up with him as he stopped to speak to a porter.

"Ah! I am in time then?" said Percival, when he looked round in reply to Hardwicke's hurried greeting.

"Yes—thank God! I promised to drive you over to Ashendale at once."

Percival nodded, and took his place without a word. Not till they were fairly started on their journey did he turn to his companion. "How did it happen?" he asked.

Hardwicke gave him a brief account of the accident. He listened eagerly, and then just saying, "It's very dreadful," he was silent again. But it was the silence of a man intent on his errand, leaning slightly forward as if drawn by a powerful attraction, and with eyes fixed on the point where he would first see the ruins of Ashendale Priory above the trees. Hardwicke did not venture to speak to him. As the man whom Sissy Langton loved, Percival Thorne was to him the first of men, but, considered from Hardwicke's own point of view, he was a fellow with whom he had little or nothing in common, a man who quoted poetry, and saw all manner of things in pictures and ruins, who went out of his way to think about politics, and was neither Conservative nor Radical when all was done, a man who rather disliked dogs, and took no interest in horses. Hardwicke did not want to speak about dogs, horses, or politics then, but the consciousness of their want of sympathy was in his mind.

As they drove through the village they caught a passing glimpse of a brougham. "Ha! Brackenhill," said Thorne, looking after it. They dashed round a corner, and pulled up in front of the farmhouse. Hardwicke took no pains to spare the noise of their arrival. He knew very well that the sound of wheels would be music to Sissy's ears.

A tall slim figure, which even on that June morning had the air of being wrapped up, passed and repassed in the hall within. As the two young men came up the path, Horace appeared in the porch. Even at that moment the change which a year had wrought in him startled Percival. He was a mere shadow. He had looked ill before, but now he looked as if he were dying.

"She will not see me," he said to Hardwicke. His voice was that of a confirmed invalid, a mixture of complaint and helplessness. He ignored his cousin.

"She will see you now that Percival has come," said Mrs. Middleton, advancing from the background. "She will see you together."

And she led the way. Horace went in second, and Percival last, yet

he was the first to meet the gaze of those waiting eyes. The young men stood side by side, looking down at the delicate face on the pillow. It was pale, and seemed smaller than usual, in the midst of the loosened waves of hair. On one side of the forehead there was a dark mark, half wound, half bruise, a mere nothing but for its terrible suggestiveness. But the clear eyes, and the gentle little mouth were unchanged. Horace said, "Oh, Sissy!" and Sissy said "Percival." He could not speak, but stooped and kissed the little hand which lay passively on the coverlet.

"Whisper," said Sissy. He bent over her. "Have you forgiven him?" she asked.

"Yes." The mere thought of enmity was horrible to him, as he looked into Sissy's eyes, with that spectral Horace by his side.

"Are you sure? Quite?"

"Before God and you, Sissy."

"Tell him so, Percival."

He stood up, and turned to his cousin. "Horace?" he said, and held out his hand. The other put a thin hot hand into it. "See here, Sissy," said Percival. "We are friends."

"Yes, we're friends," Horace repeated. "Has it vexed you, Sissy? I thought you didn't care about me. I'm sorry, dear; I'm very sorry."

Aunt Harriet, standing by, laid her hand on his arm. She had held aloof for that long year, feeling that he was in the wrong. He had not acted as a Thorne should, and he could never be the same to her as in old days. But she had wanted her boy, nevertheless, right or wrong, and since Percival had pardoned him, and since it was partly Godfrey's hardness that had driven him into deceit, and since he was so ill, and since—and since—she loved him, she drew his head down to her, and kissed him. Horace was weak, and he had to turn his face away, and wipe his eyes. But, relinquishing Percival's hand, he held Aunt Harriet's.

Percival stooped again, in obedience to a sign from Sissy. "Ask him to forgive me," she said.

"He knows nothing, dear."

"Ask him for me."

"Horace," said Percival, "Sissy wants your forgiveness."

"I've nothing to forgive," said Horace. "It is I who ought to ask to be forgiven. It was hard on me when first you came to Brackenhill, Percy; but it has been harder on you since. I hardly know what I said or did that day. I thought you'd been plotting against me."

"No—no," said Sissy. "Not he."

"No, but I did think so. Since then I've felt that, anyhow, it was not fair. I suppose I was too proud to say so, or hardly knew how, especially as the wrong is past mending. But I do ask your pardon now."

"You have it," said Percival. "We didn't understand each other very well."

"But I never blamed you, Sissy; never, for one moment. I wasn't so bad as that. I've watched for you now and then in Fordborough streets, just to get a glimpse as you went by. I thought it was you who would never forgive me, because of Percival."

"He has forgiven," said Sissy. But her eyes still sought Percival's.

"Look here, Horace," he said. "There was a misunderstanding you knew nothing of, and Sissy feels that she might have cleared it up. It *was* cleared up at last, but I think it altered my grandfather's manner to you for a time. If you wish to know the whole, I will tell you. But since it is all over and done with, and did not really do you any harm, if you like best"—he looked steadily at Horace—"that we should forgive and forget on both sides, we will bury the past here to-day."

"Yes—yes," said Horace. "Sissy may have made a mistake, but she never meant me any harm, I know."

"Don't—don't! Oh, Horace, I did—but I am sorry."

"God knows I forgive you, whatever it was," he said.

"Kiss me, Horace."

He stooped and kissed her, as he had kissed her many a time, when she was his little pet and playmate. She kissed him back again, and smiled. "Good-by, Horry!"

Mrs. Middleton interposed. "This will be too much for her," she said. "Percival, she wants you, I see—be careful." And she drew Horace gently away.

Percival sat down by the bedside. Presently Sarah came in, and went to the further end of the room, waiting, in case she should be wanted. Sissy was going to speak once, but Percival stopped her: "Lie still a little while, dear—I'm not going away."

She lay still, looking up at this Percival for whom she had watched and waited through the dreary night, and who had come to her with the morning. And he, as he sat by her side, was thinking how, at that time the day before, he was in the office at Brenthill. He could hardly believe that less than twenty-four hours had given him the assurance of Judith's love, and brought him to Sissy's death-bed. He was in a strangely exalted state of mind. His face was calm, as if cast in bronze, but a crowd of thoughts and feelings contended for the mastery beneath it. He had eaten nothing since the night before, and had not slept, but his excitement sustained him.

He met Sissy's eyes, and smiled tenderly. How was it that he had frightened her in old days? Could he ever have been cruel to one so delicate and clinging? Yet he must have been, since he had driven away her love. She was afraid of him; she had begged to be free. Well, the past was past; but at least no word nor look of his should frighten or grieve the poor child now.

After a time, she spoke. "You have worked too hard. Isn't it that you wanted to do something great?"

"That isn't at all likely," said Percival, with a melancholy smile. "I'm all right, Sissy."

"No—you are pale. You wanted to surprise us. Oh, I guessed! Godfrey Hammond didn't tell me. I should have been glad if I could have waited to see it."

"Don't talk so," he entreated. "There will be nothing to see."

"You mustn't work too hard—promise," she whispered.

"No, dear, I won't."

"Percival, will you be good to me?"

"If I can, I will indeed. What can I do?"

"I want you to have my money. It is my own, and I have nobody." Sissy remembered the terrible mistake she had once made, and wanted an assurance from his own lips that her gift was accepted.

Percival hesitated for a moment, and even the moment's hesitation alarmed her. It was true, as she said, that she had nobody, and her words opened a golden gateway before Judith and himself. Should he tell her of that double joy and double gratitude? He believed that she would be glad; but it seemed selfish and horrible to talk of love and marriage by that bedside. "I wish you might live to need it all yourself, dear," he answered, and laid his hand softly on hers. The strip of embroidery caught his eye. "What's this?" he said in blank surprise. "And your thimble! Sissy, you mustn't bother yourself about this work now." He would have drawn it gently away.

The fingers closed on it suddenly, and the weak voice panted—"No! Percival! It's mine. That was before we were engaged. You spoilt my other."

"O God!" he said. In a moment it all came back to him. He remembered the summer day at Brackenhill—Sissy and he upon the terrace—the work-box upset, and the thimble crushed beneath his foot. He remembered her pretty reproaches, and their laughter over her enforced idleness. He remembered how he rode into Fordborough, and bought that little gold thimble—the first present he ever made her. All his gifts during their brief engagement had been scrupulously returned; but this, as she had said, was given before. And she was dying with it in her hand. She had loved him from first to last.

"Percival, you will take my money?" she pleaded, fearing some incomprehensible scruple.

"For God's sake, Sissy! I must think a moment." He buried his face in his hands.

"Oh, you are cruel!" she whispered.

How could he think? Sissy loved him—had always loved him. It was all plain to him now. He had been blind; and he had come back to find out the truth, the day after he had pledged himself to Judith Lisle.

"Don't be unkind to me, Percival; I can't bear it, dear."

How could he stab her to the heart by a refusal of that which he so

sorely needed? How could he tell her of his engagement? How could he keep silence, and take her money, to spend it with Judith?

"Say 'Yes,' Percival. It is mine. Why not? why not?"

He spoke through his clasped hands: "One moment more."

"I shall never ask you anything again," she whispered. "Oh, Percival, be good to me!"

He raised his head and looked earnestly at her. He must be true, happen what might.

"Sissy, God knows I thank you for your goodness. I shan't forget it, living or dying. If only you might be spared——"

"No—no. Say 'yes,' Percival."

"I will say 'yes' if, when I have done, you wish it still. But it must be 'yes' for some one besides myself. Dear, don't give it to me to make amends in any way. You have not wronged me, Sissy. Don't give it to me, dear, unless you give it to Judith Lisle."

As he spoke he looked into her eyes. Their sweet entreaty gave place to a flash of pained reproach, as if they said, "So soon?" Then the light in them wavered, and went out. Percival sprang up. "Help—she has fainted!"

Sarah hurried from her post by the window, and the sound of quick footsteps brought back Mrs. Middleton. The young man stood aside, dismayed. "She isn't dead?" he said in a low voice.

Aunt Harriet did not heed him. A horrible moment passed, during which he felt himself a murderer. Then Sissy moaned, and turned her face a little to the wall.

"Go now—she cannot speak to you," said Mrs. Middleton.

"I can't. Only one more word!"

"What do you mean? What have you done? You may wait outside, and I will call you. She cannot bear any more now—do you want to kill her outright?"

He went. There was a wide window-seat in the passage, and he dropped down upon it, utterly worn out and wretched. "What have I done?" he asked himself. "What made me do it? She loved me and I have been a brute to her. If I had been a devil, could I have tortured her more?"

Presently Mrs. Middleton came to him. "She cannot see you now, but she is better."

He looked up at her as he sat. "Aunt Harriet, I meant it for the best. Say what you like—I was a brute, I suppose, but I thought I was doing right."

"What do you mean?" Her tone was gentler. She detected the misery in his.

Percival took her hand and laid it on his forehead. "You can't think I meant to be cruel to our Sissy," he said. "You will let me speak to her?"

She softly pushed back his hair. After all, he was the man Sissy loved. "What was it?" she asked, "what did you do?"

He looked down. "I'm going to marry Miss Lisle," he said.

She started away from him. "You told her that? God forgive you, Percival!"

"I should have been a liar if I hadn't."

"Couldn't you let her die in peace? It is such a little while. Couldn't you have waited till she was in her grave?"

"Will she see me? Just one word, Aunt Harriet." And yet while he pleaded, he did not know what the one word was that he would say. Only he felt that he must see her once more.

"Not now," said Mrs. Middleton. "My poor darling shall not be tortured any more. Later—if she wishes it—but not now. She could not bear it."

"But you will ask her to see me later," he entreated. "I must see her."

"What is she to you? She is all the world to me, and she shall be left in peace. It is all that I can do for her now. You have been cruel to her always—always. She has been breaking her heart for you—she lived through last night with the hope of your coming. Oh, Percival, God knows I wish we had never called you away from Miss Lisle!"

"Don't say that!"

"Go back to her," said Aunt Harriet, "and leave my darling to me. We were happy at Brackenhill till you came there!"

He sprang to his feet. "Aunt Harriet! Have some mercy! You know I would die if it could make Sissy any happier!"

"And Miss Lisle?" she said.

He turned away with a groan, and, leaning against the wall, put his hand over his eyes. Mrs. Middleton hesitated a moment, but her haste to return to Sissy triumphed over any relenting feelings, and she left him, pausing only at the door to make sure of her calmness.

Noon came and passed. Sissy had spoken once to bid them take the needlework away. "I've done with it," she said. Otherwise she was silent, and only looked at them with gentle, apathetic eyes, when they spoke to her. Dr. Grey came and went again. On his way out he noticed Percival, looked keenly at him, but said nothing.

Henry Hardwicke's desire to be useful had prompted him to station himself on the road, a short distance from the farm, at the turning from the village. There he stopped people coming to inquire, and gave the latest intelligence. It was weary work, lounging there by the wayside, but he hoped he was serving Sissy Langton to the last. He could not even have a cigar, to help to pass the time, for he had an idea that Mrs. Middleton disliked the smell of smoke. He stared at the trees and the sky, drew letters in the dust with the end of a stick, stirred up a small ants' nest, examined the structure of a dog-rose or two, and some buttercups, and compared the flavours of different kinds of leaves. He came forward as Dr. Grey went by. The doctor stopped to tell him that Miss Langton was certainly weaker. "But she may linger some hours yet,"

he added, and he was going on his way, when a thought seemed to strike him. "Are you staying at the farm?" he asked.

"No—they've enough without me. I'm at the little public-house close by."

"Going there for some luncheon?"

Hardwicke supposed so.

"Can't you get young Thorne to go with you? He looks utterly exhausted."

Hardwicke went off on his mission, but he could not persuade him to stir. "All right," he said at last, "then I shall bring you something to eat here." Percival agreed to that compromise, and owned afterwards that he felt better for the food he had taken.

The slow hours of the afternoon went wearily by. The Rector of Fordborough came. Dr. Grey came again. Mrs. Latimer passed two or three times. The sky began to grow red towards the west once more, and the cawing rooks flew homeward, past the window where Percival sat, waiting vainly for the summons which did not come.

Hardwicke, released from his self-imposed duty, came to see if Percival would go with him for half an hour or so, to the "Latimer Arms." "I've got a kind of tea-dinner," he said, "chops and that sort of thing. You'd better have some." But it was of no use. So when he came back, the good-natured fellow brought some more provisions, and begged Lucy Greenwell to make some tea, which he carried up.

"Where are you going to spend the night?" asked Harry, coming up again when he had taken away the cup and plate.

"Here," said Percival. He sat with his hands clasped behind his head, and one leg drawn up on the seat. His face was sharply defined against the square of sunset sky. Hardwicke stood with his hands in his pockets, looking down at him. "But you can't sleep here," he said.

"That doesn't matter much. Sleeping or waking, here I stay."

A sudden hope flashed in his eyes, for the door of Sissy's room opened, and, closing it behind her, Mrs. Middleton came out, and looked up and down the passage. But she called "Harry," in a low voice, and Percival leant back again.

Harry went. Mrs. Middleton had moved a little further away, and stood with her back towards Percival, and one hand pressed against the wall to steady herself. Her first question was an unexpected one.

"Isn't the wind getting up?" Her eyes were frightened, and her voice betrayed her anxiety.

"I don't know—not much, I think." He was taken by surprise, and hesitated a little.

"It is! Tell me the truth."

"I am—I will," he stammered. "I haven't thought about it. There is a pleasant little breeze, such as often comes in the evening. I don't really think there's any more."

"It isn't rising then?"

"Wait a minute," said Hardwicke, and hurried off. He did not in the least understand his errand, but it was enough for him that Mrs. Middleton wanted to know. If she had asked him the depth of water in the well, or the number of trees on the Priory farm, he would have rushed away with the same eagerness to satisfy her. His voice was heard in the porch, alternating with deeper and less carefully restrained tones. Then there was a sound of steps on the gravel path. Presently he came back. Mrs. Middleton's attitude was unchanged, except that she had drawn a little closer to the wall. But though she had never looked over her shoulder, she was uneasily conscious of the young man, half sitting, half lying, in the window-seat behind her.

"Greenwell says it won't be anything," Hardwicke announced. "The glass has been slowly going up all yesterday and to-day, and it is rising still. He believes we have got a real change in the weather, and that it will keep fine for some time."

"Thank God!" said Mrs. Middleton. "Do you think I'm very mad?"

"Not I," Harry answered, in a "Theirs not to reason why" manner.

"A week or two ago," she said, "my poor darling was talking about dying, as you young folks will talk, and she said she hoped she should not die in the night, when the wind was howling round the house. A bitter winter night would be worst of all, she said. It won't be *that*, but I fancied the wind was getting up, and it frightened me to think how one would hear it moaning in this old place. It is only a fancy, of course, but she might have thought of it again, lying there."

Hardwicke could not have put it into words, but the fancy came to him, too, of Sissy's soul flying out into the windy waste of air.

"Of course it is nothing—it is nonsense," said Mrs. Middleton. "But if it might be as she said, when it is warm and light—if it might be!" She stopped with a catching in her voice.

Harry, in his matter-of-fact way, offered consolation. "Dear Mrs. Middleton, the sun will rise by four, and Greenwell says there won't be any wind."

"Yes, yes. And she may not remember."

"I hope you have been taking some rest," he ventured to say after a brief silence.

"Yes. I was lying down this afternoon, and Sarah will take part of the night." She paused, and spoke again in a still lower tone. "Couldn't you persuade him to go away?"

"Mr. Thorne?"

She nodded. "I will not have her troubled. I asked her if she would see him again, and she said, 'No.' I wish he would go. What is the use of his waiting there?"

Hardwicke shrugged his shoulders. "It is useless for me to try and persuade him. He won't stir for me."

"I would send for him if she wanted him. But she won't."

"I'll speak to him again, if you like," said Harry, "though it won't do any good."

Nor did it, when a few minutes later the promised attempt was made. "I shall stay here," said Percival, in a tone which conveyed unconquerable decision, and Hardwicke was silenced. The Greenwells came later, regretting that they had not a room to offer Mr. Thorne, but suggesting the sofa in the parlour, or a mattress on the floor somewhere. Percival, however, declined everything with such courteous resolution, that at last he was left alone.

Again the night came on, with its shadows and its stillness, and the light burning steadily in the one room. To all outward seeming it was the same as it had been twenty-four hours earlier; but Mrs. Middleton, watching by the bedside, was conscious of a difference. Life was at a lower ebb: there was less eagerness and unrest, less of hope and fear, more of a drowsy acquiescence. And Percival, who had been longed for so wearily the night before, seemed to be altogether forgotten.

Meanwhile he kept his weary watch outside. He said to himself that he had darkened Sissy's last day—he cursed his cruelty; and yet, could he have done otherwise? He was haunted, through the long hours of the night, by the words which had been ever on his lips when he won her—

> If she love me, this believe,
> I will die ere she shall grieve—

and he vowed that never was man so forsworn as he. Yet his one desire had been to be true. Had he not worshipped Truth? And this was the end of all.

His cruelty, too, had been worse than useless. He had lost this chance of an independence, as he had lost Brackenhill. He hated himself for thinking of money then, yet he could not help thinking of it—could not help being aware that Sissy's entreaty to him to take her fortune was worth nothing unless a will were made, and that there had been no mention of such a thing since she spoke to him that morning. And he was so miserably poor. Of whom should he borrow the money to take him back to his drudgery at Brenthill? Well, since Sissy no longer cared for his future, it was well that he had spoken. Better poverty than treachery. Let the money go; but, oh, to see her once again, and ask her to forgive him!

As the night crept onward, he grew drowsy, and slept by snatches, lightly and uneasily, waking with sudden starts to a consciousness of the window at his side—a loophole into a ghostly sky, where shreds of white cloud were driven swiftly before the breeze. The wan crescent of the moon gleamed through them from time to time, showing how thin and phantom-like they were, and how they hurried on their way across the heavens. After a time the clouds, and moon, and midnight sky were mingled with Percival's dreams, and towards morning he fell fast asleep.

Again Aunt Harriet saw the first grey gleam of dawn. Slowly it stole in, widening and increasing, till the candle-flame, which had been like a golden star, shining out into the June night, was but a smoky yellow smear on the saffron morning. She rose, and put it out. Turning, she encountered Sissy's eyes. They looked from her to a window at the foot of the bed. "Open," said Sissy.

Mrs. Middleton obeyed. The sound of unfastening the casement awoke Sarah, who was resting in an easy-chair. She sat up, and looked round.

The breeze had died away, as Harry had foretold it would; and that day had dawned as gloriously as the two that had preceded it. A lark was soaring and singing—a mere point in the dome of blue.

Sissy lay, and looked awhile. Then she said, "Brackenhill?"

Aunt Harriet considered for a moment before she replied, "A little to the right, my darling."

The dying eyes were turned a little to the right. Seven miles away—yet the old grey manor-house rose before Aunt Harriet's eyes, warm on its southern slope, with its shaven lawns, and whispering trees, and the long terrace with its old stone balustrade. Perhaps Sissy saw it too.

"Darling, it is warm and light," the old lady said at last.

Sissy smiled. Her eyes wandered from the window. "Aunt, you promised," she whispered.

"Yes, dear; yes, I promised."

There was a pause. Suddenly Sissy spoke, more strongly and clearly than she had spoken for hours. "Tell Percival—my love to Miss Lisle."

"Fetch him," said Mrs. Middleton to Sarah, with a quick movement of her hand towards the door. As the old woman crossed the room, Sissy looked after her. In less than a minute Percival came in. His dark hair was tumbled over his forehead, and his eyes, though passionately eager, were heavy with sleep. As he came forward, Sissy looked up, and repeated faintly, like an echo—"My love to Miss Lisle, Percival!" Her glance met his, and welcomed him. But even as he said "Sissy!" her eyes closed; and when, after a brief interval, they opened again, he was conscious of a change. He spoke, and took her hand, but she did not heed. "She does not know me!" he said.

Her lips moved, and Aunt Harriet stooped to catch the faint sound. It was something about "Horry—coming home from school."

Hardly knowing what she said—only longing for one more look, one smile of recognition, one word—Aunt Harriet spoke, in painfully distinct tones. "My darling, do you want Horace? Shall we send for Horace?"

No answer. There was a long pause, and then the indistinct murmur recommenced. It was still "Horry," and "Rover;" and presently they thought she said "Langley Wood."

"Horace used to take her there for a treat," said Mrs. Middleton. "Oh, Sissy, don't you know Aunt Harriet?"

Still, from time to time, came the vague murmur of words. It was dark—the trees—she had lost——

Percival stood in silent anguish. There was to him a bitterness, worse than the bitterness of death, in the sound of those faint words. Sissy was before him, yet she had passed away into the years when she did not know him. He might cry to her, but she would not hear. There was no word for him, the Sissy who had loved him, and pardoned him, was dead. This was the child Sissy, with whom Horace had played at Brackenhill.

The long bright morning seemed an eternity of blue sky, softly rustling leaves, birds singing, and golden chequers of sunlight falling on walls and floor. Dr. Grey came in, and stood near. The end was at hand, and yet delayed. The sun was high before the faint whispers of "Auntie," and "Horry," ceased altogether; and even then there was an interval during which Sissy still breathed, still lingered in the borderland between living and dying. Eagerly though they watched her, they could not tell the moment when she left them.

It was late that afternoon. Hardwicke lounged, with his back against the gate of the orchard, and his hands in his pockets. When he lifted his eyes from the turf on which he stood, he could see the white blankness of a closed window through the boughs.

He was sorely perplexed. Not ten minutes earlier Mrs. Latimer had been there, saying, "Something should be done—why does not Mr. Thorne go to her? Or could Dr. Grey say anything if he were sent for? I'm sure it isn't right that she should be left so."

Mrs. Middleton was alone with her dead in that darkened room. She was perfectly calm and tearless. She only demanded to be left to herself. Mrs. Latimer would have gone in, to cry and sympathise, but she was repulsed with a decision which was almost fierce. Sarah was not to disturb her. She wanted nothing. She wanted nobody. She must be by herself. She was terrible in her lonely misery.

Hardwicke felt that it could not be his place to go. Somewhere in the Priory ruins was Percival Thorne, hiding his sorrow and himself—should he find him, and persuade him to make the attempt? But Harry had an undefined feeling that Mrs. Middleton did not want Percival.

He stood, kicking at a daisy root in the grass, feeling himself useless, yet unwilling to desert his post, when a hand was pressed on his shoulder, and he started round. Godfrey Hammond was on the other side of the gate, looking just as cool and colourless as usual.

"Thank God you're come, Mr. Hammond!" Harry exclaimed, and began to pour out his story in such haste, that it was a couple of minutes before Godfrey fully understood him. The new comer listened attentively, asking a question or two. He brushed some imperceptible dust from his grey coat-sleeve, and sticking his glass in his eye, he surveyed the farmhouse.

"I think I should like to see Mrs. Middleton at once," he said, when Hardwicke had finished.

Sarah showed him the way, but he preferred to announce himself. He knocked at the door.

"Who is there?" said the voice within.

"It is I—Godfrey Hammond—I may come in?"

"Yes."

He opened the door and saw her sitting by the bedside, where something lay white, and straight, and still. She turned her head as he entered, then stood up, and came a step or two to meet him. "Oh Godfrey!" she said in a low voice, "she died this morning."

He put his arm about her. "I would have been here before, if I could," he said.

"I knew it." She trembled so much that he drew her nearer, supporting her as tenderly as if he were her son, though his face above her was unmoved as ever.

"She died this morning," Mrs. Middleton repeated. She hid her face suddenly, and burst into a passion of tears. "Oh, Godfrey! she was hurt so! She was hurt so! Oh, my darling!"

"We could not wish her to linger in pain," he said softly.

"No, no. But only this morning, and I feel as if I had been alone for years!"

Still, through her weeping she clung to him. His sympathy made a faint glimmer of light in the darkness, and her sad eyes turned to it.

CHAPTER LIII.

AFTERWARDS.

THERE is little more to write. Four years, with their varying seasons, their endless procession of events, their multitude of joys and sorrows, have passed since Sissy died. Her place in the world, which seemed so blank and strange in its first vacancy, is closed up, and lost in the crowding occupations of ordinary life. She is not forgotten, but she has passed out of the light of common day into the quiet world of years gone by, where there is neither crowd nor haste, but soft shadows, and shadowy sunshine, and time for every tender memory and thought. Even Aunt Harriet's sorrow is patient and subdued, and she sees her darling's face, with other long-lost faces, softened as in a gentle dream. She looks back to the past with no pain of longing. At seventy-eight, she believes that she is nearer to those she loves, by going forward yet a little further. Nor are these last days sad, for in her loneliness Godfrey Hammond persuaded her to come to him, and she is happy in her place by his fireside. He is all that is left to her, and she is rapt up in him. Nothing is good enough for Godfrey, and he says, with a smile, that she would make the planets revolve round him if she could. It is very possible that, if

she had her will, she might attempt some little re-arrangement of that kind. Her only fear is lest she should ever be a burden to him. But that will never be. Godfrey likes her delicate, old-fashioned ways and words, and is glad to see the kind old face which smiled on him long ago when he was a lad, lighted up with gentle pleasure in his presence now. When he bids her good-night he knows that she will pray before she lies down, and he feels as if his home and he were the better for those simple prayers, uttered night and morning in an unbroken sequence of more than seventy years. There is a tranquil happiness in that house, like the short, golden days of a St. Martin's summer, or the November blooming of a rose.

In the February after Sissy's death, Godfrey went to Rookleigh for a day, to be present at a wedding in the old church, where the bridegroom had once lingered idly in the hot summer-time, and pictured his marriage to another bride. That summer afternoon was not forgotten. Percival, standing on the uneven pavement above the Shadwells' vault, remembered his vision of Sissy's frightened eyes, even while he uttered the words that bound him to Judith Lisle. But those words were not the less true because the thought of Sissy was hidden in his heart for ever.

Since that day, Percival has spent almost all his time abroad, leading such a life as he pictured long ago, only the reality is fairer than the day-dream, because Judith shares it with him. Together they travel, or linger, as the fancy of the moment dictates. Percival does not own a square yard of the earth's surface, and therefore he is at liberty to wander over it as he will. He is conscious of a curious loneliness about Judith and himself. They have no child, no near relations; it seems as if they were freed from all ordinary ties and responsibilities. His vague aspirations are even less definite than of old; yet, though his life follows a wandering and uncertain track, fair flowers of kindliness, tolerance, and courtesy spring up by that wayside. Judith and he do not so much draw closer day by day, as find ever new similarity of thought and feeling already existing between them. His heart turns to her as to a haven of peace; all his possibilities of happiness are in her hands; he rests in the full assurance that neither deed nor word of hers can ever jar upon him; in his darker moods he thinks of her as clear, still sunlight, and he has no desire apart from her. Yet, when he looks back, he doubts whether his life can hold another moment, so supreme in love and anguish, as that moment when he looked into Sissy's eyes for the last time, and knew himself forgiven.

THE END.

LONDON: PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
AND PARLIAMENT STREET

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The Cornhill magazine

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